

# CINEFANTASTIQUE

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## THE FILES



JOHN CARPENTER'S  
"VAMPIRES"

ANIMATING "ANTZ"

"URBAN LEGEND"

"PRACTICAL MAGIC"

PLUS: FILMING CHRIS CARTER'S "MILLENNIUM"

Volume 30 Number 7/8



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# MILL

## TV's best kept



**T**he best kept secret on television last season was **MILLENNIUM**, which offered some of the year's most thoughtful, imaginative, and suspenseful story-telling. Unfortunately, the second season received virtually no build-up—quite a contrast to the campaign waged by the Fox Network for the debut in 1996; since the noticeable drop in ratings after the premiere, the network no longer exerted a major effort to promote the show. The losers were the television audience, both first and second seasons.

For the second season, creator Chris Carter turned the show over to others while working on the fifth season and feature film of **THE X-FILES**. Glen Morgan and James Wong, who had served as consulting producers during the first season, were tapped for the job. New writers joined the staff. Glen's brother Darin signed on, and wrote and directed two episodes. Michael Perry, who had won an Emmy for an episode of **NYPD BLUE** co-written with Steve Gagahn, had been recruited by Chris Carter. Morgan and Wong also brought on board writing partners Erin Maher and Kay Reindl. Held over from first season were Chip Johannessen and Robert Moresco.

Both critics and the audience had expressed the opinion that **MILLENNIUM**'s first season was too grim, violent, and monotonous, with the majority of episodes devoted to serial killer plots and not enough time spent on Frank's inner life or the Millennium Group. The network wanted changes, and Morgan and Wong were happy to oblige. "There was too much gore in the first season, and it was for shock's sake," Morgan said. "There was no humor. Everybody wanted to know more about the Millennium Group. What was Frank's role with them? We needed to develop Frank. We had a good actress, Megan Gallagher, playing his wife, and what could we do with their relationship? Where can this go?"

Not everyone agreed with the changes, including some of the producing and writing staff who had been retained from the first year. "I think it was good to open up the show a little in terms of its tone," Johannessen said.

**BY PAULA  
VITARIS**



James Wong and Glen Morgan executive produced season two of **MILLENNIUM**, reviving the show with such episodes as "The Curse of Frank Black," which takes place on a very haunted Halloween.

# MILLENNIUM

## secret improves in its sophomore season.

"To my taste, some of the stuff became much more adolescent, and it changed the center of gravity a little bit—but it did open up the show."

Despite first year problems, Morgan and Wong believed *MILLENNIUM* possessed a number of strong elements. They had a strong leading man in Lance Henriksen as Frank Black. They were also intrigued by the symbolism of Frank's yellow house, his ideal home. "What really appealed to me was that Chris had said that he had made the show because of the Blacks' yellow house," Morgan noted. "This year was an opportunity to make a hero-myth of the story: take the house away from Frank, have him go through the dark forest, and get back to the yellow house."

At the beginning of the second season, Morgan and Wong sat down with Carter and explained their ideas. Carter told them to go ahead, and although they consulted with him during the season, he had very little input. Carter had been planning to write and direct an episode but eventually backed off due to his *X-FILES* responsibilities.

In the season opener, "The Beginning and the End," Morgan and Wong quickly resolved the kidnapping cliffhanger from last season. Frank's stalker, The Polaroid Man (Doug Hutchison), was now holding Catherine captive and taunting Frank. By the end of the episode, Frank has located them and killed the Polaroid Man, precipitating a crisis in Catherine, who is afraid of the feelings of hatred and anger she senses both within herself and Frank. She asks him to move out so she can gain some perspective. In the second episode, "Beware of the Dog," Morgan and Wong introduced a character known as the Old Man (R.G. Armstrong, a long-time favorite of Morgan's) who acts as a spiritual guide for Frank and begins to expose him to the arcane knowledge of the Millennium Group.

The third episode, "Sense and Anti-Sense," written by Chip Johannessen, was a government conspiracy about bio-terrorism that seemed more appropriate to *THE X-FILES*. "That didn't quite come off the way I'd hoped," Johannessen said. "That was one of these tortured things. To my mind, the rewrites got colossally worse, and part of that had to do with the fact that the first draft concerned a much more sensitive area—race—and Broadcast Standards had



Darin Morgan's off-beat "Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me" pushed the show's demons into the foreground.

certain concerns."

The fourth episode, "Monster," about accusations of abuse at a day care center and the evil within one particular child, introduced a new recurring character, psychologist Lara Means, played by Morgan's wife Kristen Cloke (previously seen in Morgan and Wong's *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*). Lara, like Frank, is a candidate for the Millennium Group and, also like Frank, experiences visions. Unlike Frank, however, her visions, often of an angel, fill her with fear, and by season's end she suffers a complete mental collapse.

Morgan and Wong created Lara as a character who would both challenge and reflect Frank. "My biggest worry was that people would think we were trying to make them like Mulder and Scully," Morgan said. "We wanted somebody with an incredible gift to counter Frank. Right from the beginning the idea was to have Lara see these visions and know what the Millennium Group was saying, was true. Knowing that would drive her crazy because if the world is ending, what's the point of going on? Coupled with that, we had the Millennium Group saying, 'We not only have the responsibility of knowing; we have the responsibility of doing something about it.' The knowledge overloads her, and she goes

insane. By seeing that, Frank Black will have a person to compare and contrast himself to: 'This is my potential fate.' And that took him back to the yellow house. Lara is a possibility of what Frank could be. If you're going through the forest, you could get eaten by a troll, or you could get out. Lara did not get out of her dark forest. When the Millennium Group says to Frank, 'Do you want to become an initiated member? You're ready to move up a rank,' he can look at Lara and say, 'I don't know.' And yet, he believes in what she sees and that what the Group is after is right. It's such an extraordinary responsibility."

Another new character was computer wizard Brian Roedecker, played by Allan Zinyk, who had been in Darin Morgan's *X-FILES* episode "José Chung's 'From Outer Space.'" Roedecker was a sarcastic wisecracker created to serve as an occasional foil to the humorless Frank. Fans did not take kindly to Roedecker, who came across to them as a knock-off of *THE X-FILES*' Lone Gunmen and totally out of place on *MILLENNIUM*. "I was surprised by the rejection of Roedecker," Morgan admitted, adding that he wished the fans had given the character more time before pronouncing judgment. Roedecker remained a favorite with Morgan, however, and he and Wong



In "Luminary," Frank Black went on a rescue mission against orders of the Millennium Group.

ican crew. The story included a ceremony where rattler venom induced hallucinations. At Morgan's behest, Reindl and Maher restored Frank's gift—his near-psychic abilities—which had vanished early in the season. "I felt last year those visions were a cheat," Morgan said. "The camera would go to a coffee cup and Frank would say, 'The murderer used a coffee cup.' It drove me nuts. What we were trying to do this year was elevate Frank's visions to a dream-like state, so he would have to interpret what he's seeing. There would be more mystical, symbolic imagery that might give him more of a sense of what's going on. I had wanted to strip away the gift for a long time and see if the show really played without it. But we got back into that. The Old Man in 'Beware of the Dog' was trying to tell Frank, 'Your gift isn't gone; it's going to be different.'"

Maher and Reindl's next episode, "Midnight of the Century," examined Frank's relationship with his emotionally withdrawn father (Darren McGavin). The two writers had drawn the assignment of scripting "a scary Christmas episode." They rented every scary Christmas movie they could find, like *SILENT NIGHT*, *DEADLY NIGHT*. "We came up with an idea of doing 'A Christmas Carol' with Frank," Reindl said. "The three ghosts would be serial killers of the past, present and future. We pitched our board, and after the first act, Glen said, 'Did we talk about this at all?' And we said, 'Well, not really, just generally.' He said, 'Well, we have this scene in the Halloween episode.'" The scene Reindl and Maher had written was a flashback where a youthful Frank discovered his neighbor was a murderer. While not identical to the flashbacks in "The Curse of Frank Black," it

were disappointed when Zinyk left the show to fulfill another acting commitment.

A major goal for the season was to give Frank's life the kind of narrative drive absent last season, and many of the episodes dealt with his on-going relationship with Catherine, his estranged father, and his friendship with colleague Peter Watts (Terry O'Quinn). Intertwined with all this was Frank's growing knowledge of the Millennium Group's true nature and the ethical situations their actions forced him to confront. These episodes made for some of the season's strongest story-telling, particularly the extraordinary "The Curse of Frank Black," a surreal, ghostly journey from uncertainty to renewed determination, played out on the silent, wind-blown streets of Frank's neighborhood on Halloween night.

Since Frank is often alone in this episode (which was influenced by the Japanese ghost movie *KWAIDAN*), there is very little dialogue; much of the meaning is conveyed visually. "I didn't want to do any more dialogue," Morgan said. "Lance is so great with looks." The director was Ralph Hemecker, whom Morgan praised highly: "Ralph came up with some beautiful shots, and I really have to credit him with a lot of the episode's tone."

Frank's Halloween journey is as much through his memories as it is through the streets of his neighborhood. At one point, he recalls his Halloween encounter at age six with the neighborhood recluse, Mr. Crocell (Dean Cain). Crocell is a World War II vet suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, but all Frank and his friends know is that he is a figure of fear to them. Crocell had killed himself, but he now reappears as a ghost to challenge Frank to give up his fight against evil, because he can't beat the devil. "Frank's journey is similar to

Lara's," Morgan commented. "That's where Frank could go, where he could quit and find a place for himself. He is at the brink—he goes back to his yellow house and throws eggs at it, like kids do at Halloween. He was on the brink of becoming Mr. Crocell. But he's got to go back and clean up the mess; otherwise, he would just be giving up. What I liked is that it did seem like a slip-up in his quest."

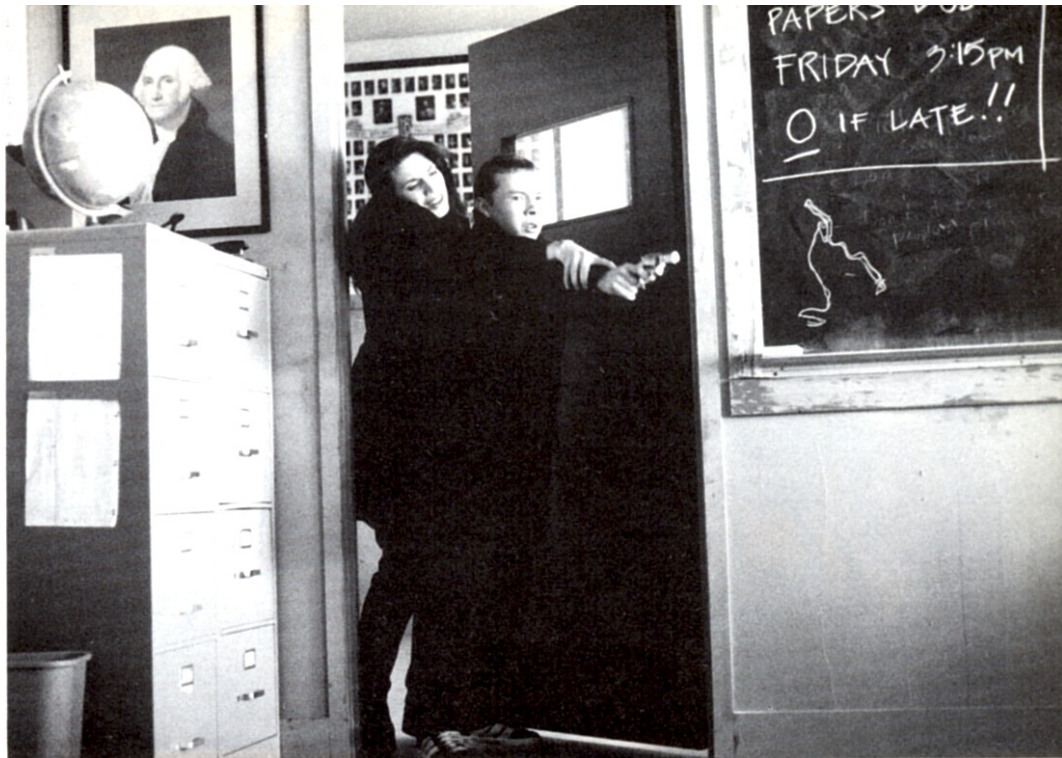
The episodes by Erin Maher and Kay Reindl also highlighted Frank's development. Their first episode, "A Single Blade of Grass," sent Frank to New York City to investigate a death at a New York City construction site that employed a Native Amer-

In "The Mikado," Frank (Lance Henriksen), Peter (Terry O'Quinn) and Roedecker (Allan Zinyk) try to track down a serial killer who has displayed his murder life on the Internet.



**“You really see Catherine opening up more. In this episode, she has great strength. We really wanted to bring that out.”**

—Writer Kay Reindl—



“Amanesis” finally showcased the often underused Catherine Black (left), played by Megan Gallagher.

was close enough that it was jettisoned. At that point, Morgan gave new instructions about the episode: while he didn’t want a scene that close to “The Curse of Frank Black,” he wanted the Christmas episode to be similar in that it would be a day in the life of Frank Black, rather than have Frank investigating a case. “It was Frank being guided along some kind of spiritual journey,” said Maher. “Since it was a Christmas episode, we wanted to deal with Frank’s family. It was a good opportunity to show some of his past with his father. Originally we had talked about Johnny Cash as Frank’s dad, but then he got sick. And then of course we were very jazzed to get Darren McGavin. The Night Stalker as Frank’s father! It was so perfect. We could not have asked for a better performance.

“We were thinking about Frank’s visions, and we thought if one of his parents had visions, that would mean something, since Frank’s daughter Jordan has them,” Maher added. “It’s something that’s passed from generation. So we decided that his mother would have visions too, mainly because last year in ‘Sacrament,’ the episode with Frank’s brother, we got a very strong impression that Frank and his father weren’t very close and his father was very remote and very strict. We were wondering why that was. And Frank and his brother never talked about their mother. So we came up with the idea of Frank’s mother dying when he was six years old, and he didn’t really understand how deep his father’s love was, so he blamed his father for letting her die alone. We also thought about the idea that Christmas is always supposed to be this perfect family holiday, but Frank’s family has split up—he’s without his wife and his child. He really doesn’t have a good relationship with his dad. It’s sort of the Christmas that you end up with, rather than the Christmas you really want.” This time, Reindl noted, by reconciling with his father and enjoying with Catherine a Christmas pageant in which daughter Jordan appeared, Frank finally got the Christmas that he wanted.

Maher and Reindl also wrote the one episode this season, “Anamnesis,” in which Frank did not appear. Instead, Catherine Black and Lara Means team up to investigate the strange behavior of a group of high school girls. One of the girls, Clare (Genele

Templeton), claims to have seen Mary. Lara and Catherine both come to the case as psychologists, and in their discussions with the girls, eventually realize that the Mary of Clare’s visions isn’t the Virgin Mary but Mary Magdalene.

Maher and Reindl became thoroughly fascinated with Mary Magdalene while researching the early years of Christianity. “We thought, ‘Wow, she rocks,’” laughed Reindl. They were surprised by what they learned, that Mary, although portrayed for nearly two centuries as a prostitute, was more likely a woman of good family and reputation. “She’s the apostle to the apostles. She’s the one who really understands what Christ is saying,” Maher said. “She was pretty much weeded out of the Bible. Women can’t be in any position of power, but when you look back at the history there were early Christian women who were priestesses. What happened to them? Why was that so threatening? We wanted to play with that a little bit.”

The episode questioned the purity of Jesus, a divergent view of Christ that Maher and Reindl had also come upon in their research. Network Standards and Practices objected, and the two writers spent many hours on the phone trying to explain their position. “They suddenly realized what the episode was about, and they were horrified,” Maher said, “because we were implying that since Jesus was Jewish and a rabbi, he probably was married and had children. Standards said, ‘You’re implying that Jesus had sex!’ And we’re going, ‘Yep!’”

The two writers enjoyed playing the rational Catherine off against the visionary Lara, who senses the breakdown that awaits her. “We got to do a little Mulder and Scully thing with them, because Lara is the spiritual one and Catherine is more scientific,”

Maher noted. “But in this episode you really see Catherine opening up a little bit more to the possibilities.” Added Reindl, “She has a really great strength in this episode. I think that one of the things she learns is that although she’s very protective of her family, she’s not protecting out of fear but out of strength, and she can do that for Frank and Jordan. Nobody is going to mess with those two when she’s around, and that’s what we really wanted to bring out in this episode.”

Another episode that traced Frank’s growth as well as his relationship with the Millennium Group was “Luminary,” written by Chip Johannessen. Frank defies Millennium Group orders and searches for a young man lost in the Alaskan wilderness who may have already died from exposure. “I wanted to write a story where Frank chose to stand up to the Millennium Group and do something he felt was personally important, based just on his instinct and his vision.” Johannessen said. “Although the Millennium Group was clearly pleased with him in the end, it wasn’t a task they set for him. And yet it was the right thing for him to do, and they were wise enough to see that. I wanted Frank to get out in the woods, having followed his inner voices, and have this moment where he realizes that the kid is dead and that he had been completely wrong to go on the search. It should be one of those moments in your life where you just feel lost. And then, he’d realize the kid was still alive and that he was called there for a reason.”

Although serial killer plots were downplayed this year, one of the season’s best episodes, “The Mikado,” centers around a particularly baffling serial killer who calls himself Avatar. Writer Michael Perry based Avatar on the Zodiac serial killer who had plagued the San Francisco area in the



In "The Time Is Now," Frank undertakes a dangerous investigation of the Millennium Group.

**“We didn’t find a new audience. People who decided it wasn’t for them, didn’t come back this season to see how the show changed.”**

—*Producer James Wong*—

interesting to get Peter excited about something that was not sanctioned by the Group and to show that he will do something like that. Terry is such a great actor, and we thought he deserved something to do instead of just saying, ‘That’s right, Frank...’ You’re right again, Frank.’ I thought, ‘What’s a great way to divide the group?’ I thought about doing a spy kind of show. I was doing research on the Knights of Templar and the Masons, and it seems like all those groups had other groups who were against them and betrayed them. There was so much intrigue. I realized that is how groups act and I thought, why shouldn’t the Millennium Group have the same thing?”

The two-parter “Owls” and “Roosters,” revealed a new level of conflict among the Millennium Group, when an artifact believed to be part of the True Cross is stolen. One faction, the Roosters, believes it was taken by another faction, the Owls, to weaken the Roosters. Morgan said that “Owls” and “Roosters” grew directly out of “The Hand of St. Sebastian,” an episode he had loved. “It’s nice to be so influenced by something your partner did,” he said. “I wanted to break the split we saw in that episode into a secular one. How can you make people believe that the end of the world is in sight? I tried to look to a scientific possibility. In the two-parter at the end of the season, I tried to tie those together with a plague. I started reading about germ warfare and thought, ‘Here are scientific events occurring in our world, and they’re predicted theologically.’”

The season’s two-part finale, “The Fourth Horseman” and “The Time is Come,” showed the outbreak of a plague which builds on the divisions within the Millennium Group and Frank’s growing distrust. He is tempted by an offer to join a rival investigatory group called The Trust. Meanwhile, he and Peter investigate the outbreak of a deadly plague, while Lara, who has been initiated into the Millennium Group’s secret knowledge, begins her final descent into madness. At the end, the Blacks have taken refuge in the remote cabin of Frank’s late father, where a sick and probably dying Catherine sneaks off into the woods so that already inoculated Frank can use their one vial of plague vaccine on

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1970s. Like Zodiac, Avatar sends cryptograms and coded messages to the police, wears an executioner’s hood and robe and, also like Zodiac, is never caught. He comes to the attention of the police and the Millennium Group when he displays his victim on a camera hooked up to a website and slays her in full view of thousands of people. Before Avatar cuts the on-line connection, a teenage boy manages to print the frame, and brings it to the police.

“I wanted a crime that no police department would have jurisdiction over,” Perry explained. “Who’s going to go after it? Ordinarily, if there’s a murder down the street, the city is going to take care of it. That’s how our entire society has been built. With a murder that isn’t tied to a physical place, this guy can go on forever, unless there’s a Millennium Group. That was the sport of it. It also has a great beginning for a mystery. It’s articulated by Frank, who says, ‘We don’t know who the victim is; we don’t know where the crime took place. We don’t have any crime scene. We don’t have any evidence except for a blurry print-out.’ That’s such a tantalizing beginning.”

With the location of Avatar’s set-up unknown, Frank is unable to connect physically with the evidence of the scene, a concept that Perry enjoyed. “Avatar cut Frank off from what he naturally does; this also has to do with the demonizing elements of the internet. It’s both a character and a thematic element, because 4,000 people per hour are logging on, hoping to see this girl die. The dehumanizing aspects of mediated communication, the internet in this particular case, are a sub-theme, and it ties in to how Frank, being cut off from being in a real place, can’t do what he normally does. That was a fun thing to play around with, and it works for both plot and character.”

“The Mikado” also marked the last appearance of Roedecker, a character Perry had loved from the beginning. “Frank and his colleague Peter Watts are accustomed to dealing with the macabre, so as a viewer you think they’re much cooler than you are. They don’t have to flinch; they’re tough guys. What I like about Roedecker in this episode is that he becomes an advocate for the audience. Roedecker is able to express the revulsion, the tears, that Frank has to constantly hold back. For the first time, Roedecker has a chance to see this is what Frank and Peter do all the time. It makes Frank seem grander because, if nobody in an episode reacts to the gruesome and macabre things that are around, they don’t seem so terrifying.”

MILLENNIUM mythology—the development of Frank’s relationship with the Millennium Group and revelations about the group’s mission—also took up a number of episodes, particularly “The Hand of St. Sebastian,” and two two-parters, “Owls” and “Roosters,” and “The Fourth Horseman” and “The Time is Now.”

In “The Hand of St. Sebastian,” Peter Watts calls upon Frank to help him on an unauthorized mission that brings them to Germany to retrieve the long-lost, recently recovered, mummified hand of St. Sebastian. They soon realize that someone is working against them, and the traitor turns out to be Millennium Group pathologist Cheryl Andrews (CCH Pounder). Wong, who wrote the script, wanted to write a Watts-driven episode, which would showcase O’Quinn and develop the Millennium Group. “I felt that by revealing that the Millennium Group had existed for centuries and setting the episode overseas, that would give the story greater scope and weight,” Wong said. “I also thought it would be in-

# MILLENNIUM

## DARIN MORGAN

*X-FILES' court jester goes from outer space to doomsday comedy.*

By Paula Vitaris

With "Humbug," "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'" and the Emmy-winning "Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose," Darin Morgan proved not only that it is possible to write comedic episodes of THE X-FILES but also that today's audiences still appreciate character-based humor and sly physical gags inspired by his love for the silent comedians and sound-era directors such as Preston Sturges. When he signed on as a consulting producer for the second season of MILLENNIUM and also agreed to write and direct two episodes, he found it more of a challenge to apply his comic sensibilities. As a writer with an admitted weakness with plotting, he found the difficulties with MILLENNIUM arose not so much from dealing with its grim tone but from its structure. "THE X-FILES always has paranormal things," Morgan said. "The paranormal allowed you an out at the end. You could always go, 'And then, another weird thing happens, and you don't know what the hell happened,' and the show is over. You can't necessarily do that with MILLENNIUM because it is more grounded in real stuff. Without having that weirdness angle, you must become much more tangible."

Morgan's solution was to approach the show not from the main characters' points of view but from that of the guest characters: his first episode, "Jose Chung's Doomsday Defense," brought back the character from his X-FILES episode "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'" his second episode, "Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me," related its events as flashbacks told by four demons discussing their experiences with humanity.

"In THE X-FILES," Morgan said, "Mulder and Scully were very delineated, at least at the beginning: Mulder believes; Scully doesn't—and you could always fall back on that. During MILLENNIUM's first season, you really don't know what

Frank Black was doing. Glen and Jim tried to make it more clear the second season, but it was never very clear what he is or what he believes in. That's one of the reasons why I avoided his point of view. The Jose Chung episode was actually about Frank Black, but it wasn't from his point of view."

Chung, portrayed by Charles Nelson Reilly, had been one of the most popular guest characters on X-FILES. In the MILLENNIUM episode, he is researching a book on self-help groups and the Millennium. When one of his contacts is murdered, he shows up at the investigation, and Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) reluctantly agrees to let Chung chronicle the investigation. Chung tags along as more murders are committed and Frank and Peter Watts (Terry O'Quinn) search for the killer, who at first appears to be a member of a group practicing something called "Selfosophy."

The episode, Morgan said, was written in reaction to media criticism about the lack of humor in the show. "I think there were a lot of problems with the first season, but I don't agree it was because the show was too dark," Morgan commented. "I just don't think it was very good. The critics needed something to latch on to, so the point I was making in 'Jose Chung's Doomsday Defense' was that it wasn't the darkness that was wrong with the show. If someone had

Morgan reused his well-liked guest character from THE X-FILES, Jose Chung (Charles Nelson Reilly), in "Jose Chung's Doomsday Defense."



Darin Morgan had four demons get together in a donut shop to share their experiences with each other in "Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me."

said, 'The stories aren't interesting enough,' I would have agreed. But I had problems with vague generalizations that really aren't true."

To answer the critics' misperceptions, Morgan had Lance Henriksen appear in one scene as detective Rocket McGrane, the hero of a series of hard-boiled pulp novels written by J. Onan Goopta, the founder of Selfosophy. Frank Black is reading one of the novels, when a dissolve takes us into the book itself. Henriksen, sporting a high blond wig and emblematic trench coat, plays McGrane as so relentlessly cheerful, hyper and self-important that you could cheerfully strangle him. "I wanted to give Lance something to do," Morgan said. "And because the critics kept saying, 'We don't want this dark depressive guy,' I wanted to show them how stupid they were. I thought they were not aware of what they wanted, but once they saw it, they would go, 'I'm an idiot.'"

Though Morgan's target with Selfosophy would appear to be Scientology, his actual intent was to spoof the self-help movement, personified by such relentless promoters as Tony Robbins. The script casts a sharp, mocking eye on what Morgan called "self-help positivism" and the people "who tell you think positive and everything will be fine." One scene in particular was a response to both the self-help movement and to the critics who thought Frank should be more upbeat. Frank tries out the Selfosophist device meant to erase bad thoughts. When asked



In "Jose Chung's Doomsday Defense" Morgan had Henriksen briefly appear as a light-hearted pulp novel detective—a satirical jab at critics who complained that MILLENNIUM's characters lacked humor.

**“Frank was seeing the devil, and I thought it would be interesting to see the reverse of that. If the devils saw Frank, what would they say?”**

—Writer-director Darin Morgan—

Morgan came up with four demons, named Abum (Dick Bakalyan), Blurk (Bill Macy), Greb (Alex Diakun) and Toby (Wally Dalton), who like to gather at a donut shop and relate what they have done lately to corrupt humanity. The four appear to everyone as normal men, but in reality they look and act like mild-mannered relatives of Tim Curry's Darkness from LEGEND. Munching on apple fritters and drinking coffee, they each tell a tale in flashback. Blurk encouraged a young man to commit a series of killings in imitation of his hero, an executed serial killer. Abum observed a man so bored by his humdrum life that he jumps out the window with as little enthusiasm as he did everything else. Greb turns himself into a dancing devil-baby and torments a TV network censor into murderous insanity. Toby had a love affair with an aging stripper (Gabrielle Rose, seen in Atom Egoyan's THE SWEET HEREAFTER), who committed suicide when he broke up with her. Each story has one thing in common that puzzles the demons: they have each observed a depressed-looking man who seems to see their "true essence." It is, of course, Frank Black.

Frank has seen devils since the inception of the show, but Morgan's fascination with the image arose from a second-season episode, "The Curse of Frank Black," in which Frank, while escorting his daughter Jordan trick or treating, experiences a number of disturbing sightings of a demon who seems to be watching him. "I thought the Halloween show was one of MILLENNIUM's best," Morgan said. "When I saw the devil in the episode with his hands folded or tapping, I immediately thought, *That's what the show needs!* Frank was seeing the devil, and I thought it would be interesting to see the reverse of that. If the devils saw Frank, what would they be saying about him?" Morgan was also intrigued with the idea of putting the devils in a commonplace setting such as the donut shop that serves as their hang-out. "That's interesting to me, rather than seeing them in visions drinking blood or something like that, which would normally be the case."

Morgan didn't set out to create four separate stories, but he couldn't work out a plot and the deadline was looming. He decided it would be easier to write an anthology-

to think of something bad, he is bombarded by a barrage of terrifying images from past cases. "These self-help techniques—which are really not more advanced than what you see in the episode—ask you to imagine something you don't like, then visualize another object to push the bad thoughts away," Morgan explained. "That may work for some minor thing in your life, but to think that someone whose job requires them to see death on a daily basis could use these simplistic techniques to make everything fine, is ludicrous. So I was making fun of that attitude and also of the critics who think that you can have a character like Frank Black be more light-hearted when the topics he's dealing with are very depressing."

Morgan enjoyed working again with the ebullient Reilly, who had become a favorite with the cast and crew while filming "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space.'" "I saw how much fun he was to work with, and I figured that since my first time directing was going to be nerve-wracking enough, I needed someone there to make it enjoyable," said Morgan. Reilly is a respected theater director as well as an actor, and Morgan found him to be an intuitive performer. "Charles is very easy to direct," he said. "We'd do a take, and I'd go, 'How about a little bit bigger?' He would simply go, 'You want an eight, and I gave you a six.' And I'd say, 'Yeah.' We didn't have to get into talking about motivation or anything like that, because that's all quite understood."

The episode's satire did not escape the notice of the Church of Scientology, which is not known for tolerating what it regards as attacks. Some of the episode's references clearly spoofed Scientology practices, and when Church officials read a copy of the script, they complained to Fox. Glen Morgan and James Wong spent several hours at

the Scientology Celebrity Center in Los Angeles, trying to iron out differences. Darin made a number of rewrites and changes including renaming his fictional group from "Selftologists" to "Selfosophists." Morgan was purposefully vague in discussing the experience, but he said he wrote his feelings about it into some of Jose Chung's dialogue, such as: "Look, you can believe whatever you want to believe in, and if it helps you, more power to you.... if I should think you're a bunch of idiots, that should be my right to say so."

"It seemed like a very simple freedom of speech issue," Morgan added. "You take free speech for granted until certain people are threatening you, whether it be legally or otherwise, to shut up. And it isn't until that happens that you go, 'How much am I willing to stand up for this?'"

Morgan killed off Chung at the end of "Jose Chung's Doomsday Defense." Why kill off such a delightful character? "To make sure nobody else uses him!" Morgan laughed. "My agent suggested that I do one episode on every show on TV and take Jose Chung with me—do a Jose Chung episode for ER and things like that. Actually, I figured people wouldn't think that I would kill him off—so I did. It was a similar dilemma to THE X-FILES. I was trying to do a lighter MILLENNIUM, and I wanted to show that you can do that kind of lightness but still have the rather depressing overtones. So you kill off your lead guy. The show ends on a joke, though, when Chung says before he dies that the meaning of the MILLENNIUM is "a thousand more years of the same old crap."

Morgan's second episode, "Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me," was something of a departure, both for the show and for the writer. It consisted of an anthology of four one-act stories, each narrated by a demon.





**"Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me":** four demons gather in a donut shop. Above: the demonic quartet appear as ordinary old men to the other customers.

style episode, rather than finish the elusive hour-long story. "I liked it a lot," Morgan said, referring to the four-story structure. "I needed help from Glen. He actually wrote the first draft of the third act, the one about the TV censor. I had to rewrite it to make it 'my voice,' or I would have had trouble directing it. I was really late with this script. I was writing it as I was prepping, which made it really, really difficult, but if it hadn't had separate acts, it would have killed me. Having those small chunks was very helpful, and I actually enjoyed it a lot. That's what I like about the episode, that each act is very different from the previous one. The curious thing was that after the show aired, I had people name their favorite devil, thinking I would agree with them or that would be the obvious choice. It was like a personality test to see what devil they thought was the best."

The most outrageous story was the third act with the TV censor (Richard Steinmetz, who also played Selfologist "Mr. Smooth" in "Jose Chung's Doomsday Defense") on the verge of a nervous breakdown, thanks



to his "hallucination" of the devil baby. The script was loaded with in-jokes, including the censor's hysterical disapproval of an X-FILES script and his subsequent assault on what looks to be the set of THE X-FILES. In one scene, thanks to Greb's demonic influences, the censor sees parking signs with forbidden words and phrases. The Fox Standards and Practices people enjoyed the job at their profession, Morgan said, adding that they requested only one change. Glen Morgan's first draft used the acronym ANT (American Network Television) for the censor's employer. Darin's rewrite changed ANT to FUX. "They said no to that," Morgan said. "So I had to go back to ANT. I think the censors got a big kick out of it. And they were in a position where if they

tried to say no to it, they knew how silly they'd be, because they'd be doing what the show was making fun of."

The fourth act was a change of pace for Morgan, a love story between the devil Toby and the aging stripper named Sally he picks up at a strip bar which serves as a recurring locale in three of the four acts. While not entirely free of humorous moments, the act's tone is overall a serious and melancholy one. For a brief time, the relationship brings happiness to the lonely Sally, although in one astonishing sequence, we learn that she recognizes Toby for who he is but chooses to remain with him.

Actor Wally Dalton "had that leading man-sadness type of quality Toby required," Morgan commented. "I was actually going to try to cast younger, but I thought he was really good for the part and he worked out great."

After Sally commits suicide, Frank arrives as part of the forensics team. He spots a weeping Toby by her side and instantly recognizes his true nature. "You must be so lonely," Frank tells him acidly. Is Toby truly grieving or not? "That's an intentional ambiguity," Morgan said. "First you're supposed to think he's falling in love with this woman. Then you're supposed to think he was just out to get her soul. At the end you're supposed to think that he really did love her. Wally was a writer himself [on BARNEY MILLER and other shows], and he understood what I was doing. It was really nice working with a writer."

With the end of MILLENNIUM's second season, Morgan left the show to work at home on his own original material. His episodes, so different from other MILLENNIUM episodes, drew a divided, "love-it-or-hate-it" reaction from the audience. "I've come to expect it," he commented. "That doesn't bother me." □

Darin Morgan directs one of the demons in "Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me."





**Producer Chris Carter (inset) tried to re-energize the fifth season by hiring renowned outside writers such as William Gibson, who penned "Kill Switch," in which Mulder and Scully's investigation (top) leads to Mulder's entrapment in a virtual reality world (bottom).**

# X-FILES

## A mixed bag of episodes and a feature film pave the way for Season Six.

**T**he 1997-98 season started off well for **THE X-FILES**. Nominated once again for an Emmy for outstanding drama series, the show lost to **LAW AND ORDER**, but lead actress Gillian Anderson picked up her second Emmy as outstanding actress in a drama series (co-star David Duchovny, also nominated, lost). Later in the season, **THE X-FILES** won yet another Golden Globe for Best Drama Series (both Duchovny and Anderson, who had won last year in their respective categories, came away empty-handed).

The start date for shooting the series in Vancouver was pushed back a month to mid-August, since Duchovny and Anderson were occupied in Los Angeles filming the **X-FILES** feature film, and the series finally broadcast its fifth season premiere on November 2, 1997. The show had moved from its Friday time slot to 9:00 p.m. on Sundays during season four, and despite competition with movies on the other networks, Sunday continued to be a winner. **THE X-FILES** regularly retained its slot in the top 20 during the season, although ratings began to slip during the spring.

The writing-producing staff consisted of four familiar names—Chris Carter, Frank Spotnitz, John Shiban and Vince Gilligan—as well as six new writers: Tim Minear (**LOIS AND CLARK**), Mark Saraceni, and two writing teams, Dan Angel and Billy Brown, and Jessica Scott and Mike Wollaefer. Carter brought in three big-name guest writers this year. Stephen King's script, "Chinga," was rewritten by Carter, who received credit this time; and science fiction authors William Gibson and Tom Maddox contributed one of the year's best, "Kill Switch."

The new writers had a hard time fitting in. By mid-season, none of their scripts had



Kim Manners directs David Duchovny in the fifth season episode, "Patient X."

been produced, and shortly before the Christmas hiatus, Spotnitz, who was in charge of the writing staff, fired Saraceni, Brown, Angel, Scott and Wollaefer. Minear exited at the end of the year. Brown and Angel's script, "All Souls," was rewritten by Spotnitz and Shiban, who received credit for the teleplay, while Brown and Angel received a "story by" credit. Scott and Wollaefer's script for "Schizogeny" was substantially rewritten by an uncredited Carter.

There were problems with the stars, too. Duchovny made it clear he wanted the show moved to Los Angeles for its sixth season, making it easier for him to find movie work during hiatus and to be near his new wife, actress Tea Leoni (**DEEP IMPACT**). Anderson quietly supported the move. Carter opposed the move, and eventually Fox officials stepped in and made the decision. The show would move to Los Angeles, and filming for the 1998-99 season began in July on the Fox lot in Century City.

Besides the move, the big news for the

**X-FILES** universe was the opening of the feature film. Could the show translate into a big screen franchise? The feature, shot in Los Angeles during the 1997 hiatus on a budget of \$62 million, opened on June 19 in the wake of a massive publicity campaign. Reviews varied from excellent (*Newsweek* put Duchovny and Anderson on its cover and called the feature a "smart, scary movie") to withering, although most were mixed. The opening weekend boxoffice (\$31 million) was substantial, although not the \$40 million Fox had been hoping for. The picture was bleaker the second weekend, when it took in only \$13.3 million, a drastic 56% drop. However, once overseas sales and merchandise are counted, the **X-FILES** movie will eventually be in the black, and a second feature film is not an impossibility. What fans can count on for now is a sixth season consisting of 22 episodes, and the likelihood of a seventh season, if Duchovny and Anderson manage to stick it out for yet another year. □

BY PAULA  
VITARIS

# X-FILES

## DIVISION CHIEF BLEVINS

*Actor Charles Cioffi on his character's demise.*

By David Hughes

"Ain't that fun?" thunders a deep New York Italian accent, as 62-year-old actor Charles Cioffi (pronounced "Choffee") chuckles about the apparent demise of his character, Division Chief Scott Blevins, in "Redux II," the one hundredth episode of THE X-FILES. Those who have followed the show since the pilot episode will remember Blevins as the FBI Division Chief—sometimes erroneously referred to as "Section Chief," though the nameplate on his desk and door clearly state his correct title—who assigns Special Agent Scully to work with the maverick Mulder on the unsolved FBI cases known unofficially as the "X" Files. Initially, Blevins kept a close eye on the new partnership's activities, with Scully reporting her observations about Mulder's methods back to her superior. But the silent, smoking presence in Blevins' office in those early episodes slowly took over as the series' principal malignant force, and Blevins receded into the background...

...Until nearly four years later, when he reappeared, listening patiently to an older, wiser Scully as she detailed the illegitimacy of Mulder's investigations—and reported his apparent suicide. By the end of the three-part story arc, Blevins has been lied to, threatened, implicated in a government-wide conspiracy, accused of accepting illegal payments from a biological research group—and, finally, shot in cold blood by his right hand man. No wonder Cioffi is chuckling. "Yes, they never really included him that much in the storyline since the beginning of the show," he said. "When we did the pilot and the first two episodes, he was more involved—recruiting [Scully], questioning her and things like that. For four years, he just dropped out of the picture, and then came back in at the end to wrap up this particular storyline. They seemed to want to say, 'Okay, this was the first four years, and now we want to be off doing something else.'"

Unfortunately, the execution of Blevins



FBI Division Chief Blevins (Charles Cioffi), who assigned Scully to the X-Files in the pilot episode, was apparently assassinated in this year's "Redux II." Guess what? He might not really be dead.

came at precisely the point when he had begun to get really interesting. "They got him away from the sitting behind a desk and feeding lines to Gillian," said Cioffi. "They had set up Blevins as being a villain, but if you look at the last episode, you'll see that he may not necessarily have been a villain—he may have been a pawn. In the episode, you see [that] the big heavy man [1st Elder] giving orders to the Cigarette Smoking Man wants to get rid of all these people for his own nefarious reasons, and then we see the 1st Agent—the part that Ken Camroux played—sitting at my desk, talking on my telephone, and shooting me. And you realize that, no, it's not Blevins; it's the 1st Agent who has been the bad guy all along," he theorized, referring to the mysterious higher-up who appeared in Blevins' office in the pilot episode, and returned almost two full seasons later in "Anasazi." He continued, "You see the panic on Blevins' face and realize that maybe Blevins was not the guy who was in charge of this whole thing; he was not the leak on the inside. Skinner does say that he was on the take from the Roush corporation," he concedes, "but then they could have doctored the books. Or maybe he was kept a hostage for some reason; maybe they had some hanky panky like J. Edgar Hoover stuff on him in order to keep him quiet."

Of course, everyone had their opinions about the climactic events of the "Gethse-

mane"/"Redux"/"Redux II" three-hander, and Cioffi is no exception. "They dangled too many carrots in front of the audience," he stated unequivocally. "This is not like a French Opera, where you wrap everything up with a pink ribbon at the end. No—they have to carry on and carry out some of those storylines. I mean, that was such an emotional thing, that for four years we have been confronted, almost every episode, with this [subplot] about Mulder's sister. And then to actually [have him] confront his sister and have the Cigarette Smoking Man as her foster father, and she doesn't want to see her real mother?" He whistles appreciatively. "That's an awful lot of stuff, you know." He laughed. "And then the whole business with Scully's family...Does that get extended into the future with Mulder and Skinner? And what does that really mean?" Cioffi evidently relishes untangling the convoluted storyline, having followed the show himself as a viewer since his own appearance in the pilot, but, he says, spare me the soap opera. "I hope they don't go spinning off into something that's saccharin and maudlin. Just give me the facts—don't play me the violin."

"If you look at 'Redux,'" he added, "there was an awful lot of re-introducing people and sitting behind desks and walking down corridors, and the dialogue I remember as being especially difficult because it was so stilted. Everything was exposition, so you're continually telling a story, but you don't show anybody anything—it's like an hour-long narration. And then finally, in the last episode, everything happens: two people get shot, and Scully almost dies, and she comes back, and Mulder meets his sister and—Holy Jesus! How can they keep this up? Well, they can't keep this up, but they're gonna end it and try to move on in another direction."

Having worked on the first three episodes, and three on the cusp of the fourth and fifth seasons, Cioffi is perhaps in a unique position to comment on the changes behind the scenes from season one

continued on page 124

## FIFTH SEASON EPISODE GUIDE

By Paula Vitaris

"There's a dead man on the floor in my apartment and it's only a matter of time before he begins to stink the place up."  
—Mulder

### REDUX

11/2/97. Editor: Heather MacDougall. Written by Chris Carter. Directed by R.W. Goodwin.

"Redux" repeats the events of last season's finale "Gethsemane," filling in the gaps that led to the episode's cliffhanger. It's like a prime-time version of an old movie serial that ended on a cliffhanger each week. In "Redux," we learn that Mulder and Scully are in cahoots together to deceive the Consortium and smoke out its mole in the FBI (Scully suspects Skinner). Skinner knows from the autopsy report that the body in Mulder's apartment is not Mulder's. He is furious with Scully for lying about the identity of the dead man, a government operative named Scott Ostelhoff who was killed in a shoot-out with Mulder when Mulder discovered him spying on his apartment from the apartment above. While Scully stalls the FBI inquiry, Mulder takes Ostelhoff's I.D. card and uses it to enter a Department of Defense complex, where he bumps into Michael Kritschgau (John Finn), the DOD employee who told him in "Gethsemane" that the existence of aliens was a government hoax. Kritschgau reiterates to Mulder that the government and the military concocted all the stories about aliens to hide the truth about massive Cold War weapons build-ups. Mulder then uses his fake ID to enter a secret area, where he discovers dozens upon dozens of "alien" bodies (presumably the fake aliens described by Kritschgau in "Gethsemane") and dozens of sleeping pregnant women. He also penetrates the Pentagon archive where he locates Scully's file and retrieves a tube with a liquid he hopes will cure Scully's cancer; it turns out to be merely de-ionized water. Scully also learns that her DNA matches DNA taken from the ice core samples retrieved in "Gethsemane." Further evidence, she believes, that her cancer was manufactured by humans, not aliens. The end of "Redux" catches up with the end of "Gethsemane": Scully "denounces" Mulder's work and collapses.

"Redux" is all plot, plot, plot. Much of the plot is unbelievable. Why is Mulder surprised someone is eavesdropping on him? This is not the first time his apartment has been bugged. Why would someone spying on Mulder possess phone records leading back to the FBI? Is someone trying to frame Skinner? If so, it's not borne out in the episode. Mulder enters secret DOD levels with incredible ease, although it makes no sense that a

The Cancer Man is apparently assassinated at the end of "Redux II." Guess what (stop me if you've heard this one): he isn't really dead.



"Redux" resolved the fourth season cliffhanger "Gethsemane." Guess what? Mulder didn't really kill himself after all. Surprised? We thought not.

low-level operative like Ostelhoff would have access to these areas. Scully has inexplicably become an expert in DNA testing as well as pathology, and just as inexplicably, all the equipment she needs is located at a paleoclimatology lab. The episode drags, too, with endless voiceovers from Mulder and Scully that function as a "Redux"-within-a-"Redux": just as "Redux" explains "Gethsemane," the voiceovers explain "Redux." They're convenient shorthand for characterization and motivation but end up sucking the energy out of the episode. Kritschgau's monologue on the government's alien hoax, accompanied by shot after shot drawn from documentary footage, is insufferable. There's also the question of the believability of Kritschgau's story, but Mulder seems to buy it.

There is one truly galvanizing scene, and that's the confrontation between Scully and Skinner after he follows her to the lab where she is performing her DNA test. The suspicions, the accusations, the withholding of information, the decision to trust, if only for a few more hours—suddenly, "Redux" springs to vibrant life, only to sink back into the narrative mud afterwards.

One also wonders about the choices Mulder and Scully make in this episode, both tactical and moral. Mulder's assault on Ostelhoff is extraordinarily foolish, ending, naturally, in disaster, when Ostelhoff grabs his weapon and Mulder's shoots him first. (Lucky for Mulder the neighbors don't hear anything, although they heard the shooting in the building back in "Anasazi.") Then there's the choice Mulder and Scully make to mutilate Ostelhoff's corpse, pass him off as Mulder and lie to Skinner and the FBI committee. They are taking a big step towards becoming the thing they are trying to fight, yet there is no hesitation on their part, no concern about what they are doing. The episode tells us that what they're doing is quite all right, that the ends do justify the means. It's a disturbing turnabout for a series—and two characters—that until now refused to take the easy way out.

"I saved your ass, Agent Mulder!"  
—Skinner

### REDUX II

11/9/97. Editor: Lynne Willingham. Written by Chris Carter. Directed by Kim Manners.

You can't help keep thinking of "One Breath" while watching "Redux II." The basic plot isn't all that different, but it's impossible to duplicate the magic of "One Breath." Of course, that doesn't stop the writers from trying. So once again, Scully is hospitalized and close to death, while Mulder, now officially alive, tries to maneuver through a web of lies and deceit to find a cure for Scully. But where everything in "One Breath" moved inexorably towards a heart-wrenching resolution, here it's paint-by-numbers. That almost mystical bond between them in "One Breath" is now diluted by a plot overstuffed with FBI hearings, the

possible return of Samantha, and Scully's turn not towards Mulder or even her own strength but to God. As the episode proceeds, Mulder tries to find out the truth about the mole in the FBI and Kritschgau's allegations about government cover-ups. He encounters the Cigarette Smoking Man, who tries to lure Mulder to his side by throwing him some very big carrots, including the information that the tube of de-ionized water holds precious cargo: a chip identical to the one removed from Scully's neck last season. Later on, the Smoking Man arranges a meeting between Mulder and a woman (Megan Leitch) Mulder takes to be Samantha. She tearfully relates what has happened since her abduction and how she has been cared for by her "father"—to Mulder's shock, the Cigarette Smoking Man. The next morning the Smoking Man offers Mulder a deal: quit the FBI and he'll show him the truth about aliens and everything he's ever been searching for, but Mulder refuses. At the next session of the FBI inquiry, Mulder names Section Chief Blevins as the mole (Blevins is assassinated within minutes). And a hit man shoots the Cigarette Smoking Man. While all this is going on, Scully has the new chip placed back in her neck, undergoes last-minute experimental chemotherapy and also prays with Father McCue (Arnie Walters) for salvation. The next day at the hospital Skinner tells Mulder the cancer is in remission, the Smoking Man's body has disappeared, and Blevins was on the payroll of a biotech company called Roush.



A moment of agony for Mulder in "Redux II," as he fears he will not be able to find the cure for Scully's advancing cancer.

It's all wrapped up neatly yet ambiguously. Mulder still has no evidence that Kritschgau's statements are true. Actually, he doesn't have anything anymore. At the end, he's exiled himself to the hospital corridor, alone and apart from Scully and her celebrating family. His quest has been taken from him, because he believes the woman he met was Samantha. While the diner scene is deeply affecting, thanks to the sensitive acting of Duchovny and Leitch, this plot development is a major misstep. It strips Mulder of his motivating force and leaves him empty, without purpose. There's something offensive, both to Mulder and Samantha, in passing off what should have been the climax of the show as a B-plot, just another twist in an episode full of twists. Shooting the Cigarette Smoking Man is a cheap ploy. He's obviously not dead, so why do it? As for Scully, it's a relief the cancer is in remission so the show can move beyond the melodramatics of this medical soap opera, in which Scully's cancer barely affects her until it's time for the expected moment of life or death. The prayer scene is sheer emotional manipulation. And just as the return of Samantha robs Mulder of his defining force, Scully's need to submit to powers outside herself the Consortium's chip, and yes, God—or face death, robs her of the qualities that made her most admirable, particularly as the rare female character on television with a mind of her own. If only Scully's quandaries had concerned her professional life, not her sinuses (or her ovaries).



What makes "Redux II" tolerable is Duchovny, who always hits the right notes of anger, despair, grief, relief, or emotional numbness. He is ably assisted by Pileggi's stern but supportive Skinner and Pat Skipper as Scully's over-protective brother.

**"We at the FCC enjoy forging positive ties with the American public. It's our way of saying communication is just another way of sharing."**  
—Byers

### UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

★★★

11/16/97. Editor: Lynne Willingham. Written by Vince Gilligan. Directed by Kim Manners.

"Unusual Suspects" is filler—but amusing filler, with some rather dire implications at the end for Mulder. Set in the past, it provides a convenient continuity break between the conspiracy arc of the previous three episodes and the present day stand-alone episodes to follow. The year is 1989. The location: a Baltimore computer and electronics show. Among the dealers are one Melvin Frohike (Tom Braidwood) and one Ringo Langly (Dean Haglund), apparently long-time rivals. The Federal Communications Commission has set up shop in a nearby booth manned by straight-arrow bureaucrat John Fitzgerald Byers (Bruce Harwood). Yes, these three are the Lone Gunmen, but before they were the Lone Gunmen. Byers spots a mysterious, cool, Hitchcockian blonde in distress (Signy Coleman) and is instantly smitten. Her name is Holly Modeski, she says, and she is searching for her daughter, who has been abducted by her "psychotic" ex-boyfriend. Byers agrees to help her, and soon, to his horror, he finds himself hacking into a secret Department of Defense computer database, downloading a file on the missing girl, and enlisting a quarrelsome Frohike and Langly to help him decode it. Then the boyfriend appears—but he turns out to be a young Agent Fox Mulder. According to Agent Mulder and the Justice Department, Byers' new crush is a former government chemist responsible for the deaths of several colleagues. After that, all hell breaks loose—the Department of Defense is on to the hack and takes away Byers' FCC colleague. Modeski (whose real first name is Suzanne, not Holly), claims she's been framed, then finds a listening device in her molar, which she removes with a pair of pliers. There's a shoot-out at a warehouse where unknown government forces have stored a paranoia-inducing gas that will be tested on an unknowing citizenry through asthma inhalers.

In one day, the world has turned upside down for the putative Lone Gunmen, who have had their eyes opened to governmental hidden agendas. The greatest change is in Byers, who had been a loyal public servant. Harwood is a delight as the naive Byers, registering expertly the shifts in Byers' world view with the arrival of each new bit of information. And Haglund and Braidwood make for good comic relief; they get the best lines. Haglund's Dungeons and Dragons scene is

**Pursued by the virtually invisible predator in "Detour," agents Mulder and Scully spend a fearful night isolated in the woods.**



**In a crossover episode, HOMICIDE's Detective Munch (Richard Belzer) interrogates Bruce Harwood's Byers in "Unusual Suspects."**

hilarious, especially at the end, when Langly orders Frohike to "say it" and Frohike is forced to admit that Langly has "the best kung fu." Signy Coleman is nicely mysterious as Modeski. The reappearance of a not-yet dead X (Steven Williams) at the warehouse is welcome, since Williams burns up the screen whenever he's in the shot and X was such a fascinating character. Best of all is a cameo appearance by Richard Belzer, reprising his HOMICIDE character, the cynical Detective Munch, who interrogates Byers in the episode's framing scenes. Duchovny seems to have fun as the younger Mulder, too. But what happens to Mulder is more than a little disturbing. Mulder is sprayed with the paranoia-inducing gas at the warehouse and believes he's seeing aliens—a hallucination most likely conjured up from his memory of a UFO exhibit at the convention. This doesn't exactly jibe with the oft-told story that hypnotic regression first unlocked his memories of Samantha's abduction. So was it gas or was it hypnosis? Mulder's belief in gas-induced hallucinations doesn't say much for his ability to think rationally.

**"Unfortunately around this time of year I always develop this severe hemorrhoidal condition."**  
—Mulder

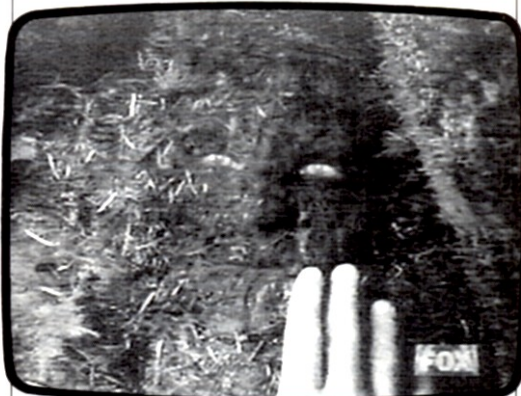
### DETOUR

★★

11/23/97. Editor: Casey O Rohrs. Written by Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Brett Dowler.

Mulder and Scully are reluctantly on the way to a "Teamwork" communications seminar in Florida with another pair of FBI agents when the trip is interrupted by a roadblock. Several people have disappeared in the nearby woods, possibly the result of a wild animal attack. Mulder, seizing an excuse to escape the unwanted seminar, quickly involves himself in the case; evidence leads him to speculate that some kind of unknown forest creature is fighting back against encroaching development. He and Scully, along with search and rescue chief Michele Fazekas (Colleen Flynn) and tech-head Jeff Glaser (Anthony Rapp), search the woods using an infra-red device. They spot two figures, but after a chase, Michele and Jeff also disappear suddenly and Mulder is attacked and wounded. Mulder and Scully are stranded in the woods overnight. The next morning, Scully falls into the creatures' lair and discovers its victims, some dead, some on the verge of death. When she is attacked in the cave, she shoots one of the creatures, which turns out to be a manlike being formed out of a wood and leaf substance. The other FBI agents and police locate and rescue everyone. Mulder theorizes that the creatures may be the remnants of the company of Ponce de Leon, who came to Florida 400 years ago searching for the Fountain of Youth. Perhaps they've adapted so well they have become literally part of the woods and now are reacting to protect their home.

"Detour" is about communication—or, miscommunication; a deliberate detour on Mulder's part, to avoid serious talk. His discomfort concerning the communications seminar is nicely observed. Every time Scully attempts to connect with him, he deflects her, either by walking out when she brings him wine and cheese at the motel, or by wisecracking, when they're lost in the woods and she wants to talk about her near-death from cancer. These scenes don't resonate particularly deeply—the dialogue isn't revealing or profound. Scully's question to Mulder about whether he's ever thought about death is preposterous, considering how often they've been close to death over the past few years. And although Scully gets to bring up her cancer, Mulder is written as a blank; he seems utterly unaffected by the events of "Gethsemane," "Redux" and "Redux II." There's not even a clue that Mulder has told Scully about Samantha's return. Scully's singing to a wounded (and temporarily infantile) Mulder is a failed attempt to create "a special X-FILES moment," a poor substitute for meaningful dialogue between the two. There are no breakthroughs for Mulder and Scully, unless one counts their building together in the cave a "tower" of bodies—a grotesque version of the tower-building trust exercise described by one of the other FBI agents—as their own peculiar way of communicating.



**The monsters in "Detour" are descendants of Spanish Conquistadors who have evolved the ability to camouflage themselves in the woods.**

But where "Detour" really fails is as an X-File. Mulder's theories about the unseen predator are not a leap of genius thinking; they're so nonsensical that he comes off looking like an idiot. The investigation through the woods is strictly from Bad Television Writing 101. Here we have four people planning to spend hours in the woods without adequate preparation or equipment. Only Michele has substantial outdoor training, and she is the only one to bring survival gear (which means she doesn't know much about properly equipping a rescue team). So of course when she disappears, Mulder and Scully are stuck without water, food, fire, shelter, first aid or a radio. (At least they have their guns!) It's Mulder who has figured out that the forest creature's mode of attack is to divide and conquer its prey. But, oddly enough, as soon as he and the others locate two creatures via the infra-red, they divide up. Unfortunately, what could have been a wonderful PREDATOR-type episode, exploiting the most basic of stories, instead only skims the surface of humanity's responses to the primordial forest. Even the cinematography is flattened out to a dull wash of gray and green; the woods don't look mysterious or frightening at all—just wet.

Flynn is excellent as Michele Fazekas, and the brief appearance of RENT star Anthony Rapp as Jeff is most welcome. And even if the forest creature's glowing red eyes are bad camouflage, they make for a very creepy effect.



# X-FILES

## LONE GUNMEN

*Exploring the origins of the conspiracy trio.*

By Douglas Eby

The editors of the fictional magazine "The Lone Gunman"—a journal of conspiracy theories about the Kennedy assassination and various other government plots—were originally written for a one-time appearance on THE X-FILES, but when Chris Carter, Glen Morgan, and James Wong discovered the level of Internet enthusiasm for the characters, they had the trio of Langly (Dean Haglund), Frohike (Tom Braidwood) and Byers (Bruce Harwood) continue making regular appearances.

"Short, unshaven and clad in combat boots...the Frog Prince of the Lone Gunman editorial board"—that is from the description of Frohike on the official X-FILES website, which goes on to say, "From his first leering appearance in 'E.B.E.,' he has made no secret of his attraction to Agent Dana Scully. The photographic and surveillance specialist in the group, he

once loaned Mulder a pair of night-vision goggles only after extracting Scully's phone number from him. Yet he has shown a tender side as well, being the only person to bring Scully flowers when she lay dying." Braidwood noted that, this past season, the Lone Gunmen showed up a little more often than in previous ones. "It's sort of catch as catch can," he said. "It depends on what the requirements of the script are."

Regarding Frohike's relationship to Scully, Braidwood said it has "become more of a friendship than anything else. Not so much lecher-type thing, but ogling Scully. There's less of that now, because there's a familiarity and respect between the characters. And that extends to Mulder as well."

Described on the official website as "Sporting black-rimmed glasses, long blond hair and T-shirts from a dozen hard-rock bands, he is not the picture of a conventional conspirator"—Langly is also listed as



Though introduced as one-shot character, Frohike (Tom Braidwood), Langly (Dean Haglund) and Byers (Bruce Harwood) continue to grow in popularity.

the communications expert of the group, the one "most likely to joke with Mulder or invite him to 'hop on the Internet to nitpick the scientific inaccuracies' of a new science-fiction show. But he's also a little bent." Haglund, who plays Langly, noted that the episode "Unusual Suspects" was "a flashback to 1989, and sort of set up how we all met, and how we met Mulder and why we pursue the conspiracies we do. [As Langly] I was selling illegal cable, and I was known for my hacking skills at that time. Byers and Frohike needed to help this woman, who was sort of the instigator of us all. They brought me in because they needed my hacking skills, and we found out all these horrible things going on in Baltimore. So once that happened, we all bonded and worked as a team from there on in."

Haglund recalls that in the episode "Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man," the conspiracy paper was once called something else: "I guess at the time, they were thinking of making a whole dream sequence, and the prop department made a little

sign that said The Magic Bullet. So now it seems, we put out two newspapers."

The third member of the team, Byers, is considered a military and information systems expert who "looks like a professor who has wandered into a CIA rendezvous by mistake" according to Fox publicity. "His neat beard and dapper suits seem out of place among his grungier colleagues, but his sharp mind and no-nonsense demeanor attest to an encyclopedic knowledge of conspiracy theory and current speculation on everything from the Kennedy assassination to the latest in DNA research."

One of the aspects of THE X-FILES Harwood appreciates is "the way they extrapolate technology from the real world into the series, how they take an idea and adapt or expand it or exaggerate it." He says he doesn't know what Byers does for a living, but he imagines "he spends most of his time in the office. I decided a long time ago he was married, and whatever his wife does is probably the main income for them. And I

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Fans learned how the Lone Gunmen first got together in "Unusual Suspects," a back-dated episode that co-starred Richard Belzer as Detective Munch.



# X-FILES

## WALTER SKINNER

*Patience pays off for actor Mitch Pileggi.*

**F**BI Assistant Director Walter Skinner carries a badge and a gun, seeking that elusive entity known as Truth. Mitch Pileggi—Skinner on *THE X-FILES*—will soon be carrying wipes and a pacifier, seeking that more elusive thing known as sleep. Pileggi, 46, recently took on the most challenging role of his life with the birth of his and his wife Arlene's baby girl, last May.

While in Atlanta as part of the X-Files Expo Tour 1998, the actor was anticipating two big events. After the arrival of his daughter, Pileggi was looking forward to the opening of *THE X-FILES* feature film in June. But for the time being, the Expo and the hit Fox show were the focus. Dressed casually in blue jeans, a dark pink T-shirt, cowboy boots, and a blue baseball cap, the actor—who got his start in Austin, Texas—sat back on a dressing room sofa backstage, while thousands of fans clamored outside in the dungeon-like venue, waiting for guest appearances and surrounded by X-Files paraphernalia and games.

This interactive road show, which began a 10-city tour in March, was held in the International Ballroom in Atlanta—a large music hall with black walls and a decisively gloomy atmosphere. "Most of the venues we've done are in airport hangars or military installations," said Pileggi of the tour's attempt to stay away from any "normal" setting. The enthusiasm of the fans is daunting, as many scream and whistle when actors take the stage. "I get very flustered and stammer for about five minutes," said Pileggi. After he regains his composure, it comes easy. "These are fans of the show, and we have a lot in common. I'm really into it [the show], but not like they are," he said. "The imagination that goes into it... the writers allow viewers to use their imagination, too. It says a lot for



Mitch Pileggi (right) as Walter Skinner confers with Mulder and Scully in the five season closer, "The End."

the show."

When asked if he has much advanced notice of the plot lines of the show, Pileggi laughed. "The last episode we shot, I got the script a week before we started shooting. I had no idea what my role would be, they just said I would be in a lot of scenes. I like those shows," he said with a grin.

With credits that include the lead in Wes Craven's *SHOCKER*, he's happy to play one of the good guys at last. "I like being able to play a good guy," he said. "It had been a long time since I could play on the right side." His imposing appearance—topping 6' and with a shiny dome—typecast the actor, who started his career as a military contractor living abroad. Pileggi also appeared in television series such as *DALLAS*, *MODELS INC.*, *ROC*, *CHINA BEACH* and *GET A LIFE*. Feature film credits include *BASIC INSTINCT*, *VAMPIRE IN BROOKLYN*, and *GUILTY AS CHARGED*. Of

course, his latest film to wrap is *THE X-FILES MOVIE*.

At the time of the interview, Pileggi had not yet seen the movie. "I've been told it's really good. [Director] Rob Bowman saw it and really liked it."

When asked about future career plans, Pileggi expresses gratitude to the show that made his name. "I'm so involved with the show, but I'd like to do features. In this business, it's hard to anticipate and look down the road. I had a lot of friends who hated me when I got the part in *THE X-FILES* [because] it's such a good show. All of our heads have been swimming [with the attention]," he said.

One of Pileggi's aspirations includes working with Wes Craven again. "He's a good friend, and we keep in touch. I was excited for him with the *SCREAM* movies," he said. "I'd love to work with him again."

On the upcoming birth, he was as tight-lipped as Skinner doling out information on a need-to-know

basis. Pileggi will only say that they are expecting a girl.

What about the name? "I'll just say this is a great name for a boy or a girl—you'll find out soon enough," he said.

He does add that he and his wife have put a lot of thought into whether their daughter should sleep in their bed. A topic that garners almost as much controversy in the world of new parents as a government conspiracy does in the world of *THE X-FILES* it's a tough one. "We've talked to people about the baby sleeping in our bed," said Pileggi. "But I toss and turn a lot, so..." The subject clearly brings out an almost mushy side to the man. "It's the best thing that ever happened in my life. I wanted to find the right woman and the right time. I've waited a long time for this," he said.

And with a starring role in a hit show, feature film and parenting gig, Pileggi proves that sometimes, patience is rewarded.

Debra Warlick



"Scully, do you think it's too soon to get my own 1-900 number?"

—Mulder

## POST-MODERN PROMETHEUS ★1/2

11/30/97. Editor: Lynne Willingham. Written and directed by Chris Carter.

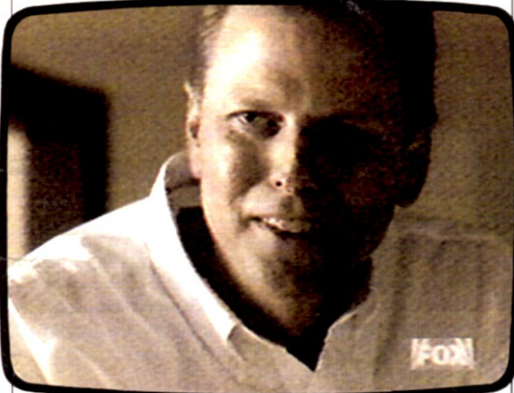
A cautionary tale told through the pages of a comic book, "Post-Modern Prometheus" is Chris Carter's updated take on the Frankenstein story, with a nod towards both Mary Shelley in the episode's title and towards James Whales' *FRANKENSTEIN* and *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, in its use of black-and-white film stock and thunder and lightning as dramatic accents. The difference is that the *FRANKENSTEIN* movies are horror classics, and "Post-Modern Prometheus" is...something else.

The story begins with the turning back of a comic book cover. Mulder and Scully come to a small Indiana town in response to a letter from a woman who saw Mulder on *THE JERRY SPRINGER SHOW*: Shaineh Berkowitz (Patti Tierce) claims that a man with a misshapen face invaded her home, rendered her unconscious, and made her pregnant—an assault identical to the one that produced her son Izzie (Stewart Gale) 18 years ago. Mulder thinks there may be something to the woman's story, once he spots Izzie's self-published comic book, "The Great Mutato," about a man with the face of a monster. Soon he and Scully are not only looking for the Mutato but have met an old man who claims the real monster is his geneticist son, Dr. Pollidori (John O'Hurley). Pollidori's wife, Elizabeth (Miriam Smith), falls victim to Shaineh's assault and when Mulder and Scully investigate, they also fall unconscious, not observing that Dr. Pollidori's father stands nearby wearing a gas mask. What Mulder and Scully don't know is that the old man is sheltering the Mutato, who is the product of one of Pollidori's experiments. Pollidori and his father quarrel, and Pollidori kills him; then, to cover his guilt, Pollidori leads the townspeople to his father's farm to hunt down the Mutato. Mulder and Scully arrive first, having realized that the deformed man (Chris Owens) is not the murderer. Pollidori and the Mutato are taken into custody, but then Mulder, like a character in a Pirandello play, makes demands of the writer, because this isn't the right ending. The episode ends with Mulder and Scully taking the Mutato to a Cher concert and everyone having a great time. The comic book closes.

Humor has certainly proven to be an effective element in the Frankenstein story; director James Whales, in *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, injected some marvelously campy moments. Also, it seems quite right that *THE X-FILES* would pay its own homage, because the series has been dealing with arrogant scientists and doctors who since the first season have manipulated life.

Unfortunately, "Post-Modern Prometheus" falls

**Scully's brother Bill gives his stricken sister words of encouragement in "A Christmas Carol," an episode where disbelief is hung out to dry.**



**Toby Lindala's monster makeup for The Great Mutato, in Chris Carter's misfired *FRANKENSTEIN* takeoff "The Post-Modern Prometheus."**

flatter than the chemical pancakes used to anesthetize the victims of this episode. The great silent comedian Harold Lloyd once wrote that comedy lies "in the humor of events, not in any conscious effort of the author to be cute." "Post-Modern Prometheus" is fatally self-conscious and fatally cute. The script throws together a collection of situations and observations that bear little relation to each other. The episode comments on the consequences of unchecked scientific experimentation and the foolishness of a populace that aspires to nothing more than getting on television—especially if it's *THE JERRY SPRINGER SHOW*—and the notion that people really are nothing more than animals driven by instinct. None of this fits together really well, and the literalness of the comedy is painful, with the barn scene a particular low point. The mob of townspeople herd together and individuals are picked out by the camera in tandem with the animals they resemble. And that's the totality of the commentary; it's taken no further than that. They're just dumb animals whose opinions about Mulder and Scully fluctuate on the sole basis of whether they believe the agents will get their town on *THE JERRY SPRINGER SHOW*.

The mean-spiritedness of this is mind-boggling. All the characters are caricatures—or sketches of caricatures. The only one with any inner life at all, Dr. Pollidori's wife, Elizabeth, is treated as a joke. None of this is funny, although it's supposed to be; the humor is lumpy and ungainly, as is the direction. The barn scene serves again as an example, where the crowd mills about and the blocking has no sense of space or pace or rhythm. It brings to mind the equally unfunny and clumsy mob scenes in "Syzygy." And then the episode stops dead for the Mutato's Big Speech, which is all exposition and fails completely to evoke the poignancy it should. But most egregious is the ending at the Cher concert, as the Mutato twists to the music and Mulder and Scully dance. On the surface, it looks like a sweet bit of wish-fulfillment, but probe deeper and it's as mean-spirited as the rest of the episode. It's a false ending; you can wish all you want that the Mutato gets to see his beloved Cher, but that doesn't change the fact that he participated in at least two sexual assaults on women. But this ending doesn't acknowledge that; it's irony-free. (Perhaps a better source for this episode should have been Murnau's *THE LAST LAUGH*, with its tacked-on and scathingly parodic "happy ending.") The ending also points out another flaw, the episode's fuzzy narrative voice. Who is telling this story? It seems that this episode must be an issue of Izzie's comic book, because the real Mulder would never call out for the writer to change the ending (it's clearly a literary device). So we are given a comic book written by a clueless young man with little to say, and who even portrays himself as such. But even this is uncertain; there are scenes that Izzie couldn't possibly have known about, particularly Mulder's unexpected confession to Shaineh that he doesn't

know if he believes in "all that" (i.e., the aliens) anymore. This is a line of vital import for Mulder, and the only clue for a good part of the season to the doubt that must be tormenting him; yet here it is as a throw-away line in an episode that's essentially a fairy-tale. It's inconceivable that Izzie would know what Mulder's going through. So maybe it isn't Izzie's comic book. And thus we have an episode with no particular point of view.

On the positive side, the cast is fine. Duchovny and Anderson seem to be having fun, particularly Duchovny, who usually blooms when a bit of humor is thrown his way. Chris Owens does his best under what looks like a ton of makeup. And that double head is really spectacular.

**"I'd appreciate seeing everything that you have...in the spirit of the season?"**

—Scully to Detective Kresge

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL ★1/2

12/7/97. Editor: Heather MacDougall. Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shiban, Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Peter Markle.

As in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, a ghostly message and a series of dreams is presaged with unexpected chimes, but instead of servant bells, it's the phone. Scully has arrived at her brother Bill's home at a San Diego naval base to spend the Christmas holiday. The phone rings, Scully picks it up, and hears what sounds like the voice of Melissa, her murdered sister, with a mysterious message: "She needs you; go to her." Scully traces the call back to a nearby house, where she finds the police investigating the suicide of one Mrs. Roberta



**In "A Christmas Carol," a ghostly voice leads Scully to an investigation involving a young girl who turns out to be her biological child.**

Sim. The dead woman has a three-year-old adopted daughter named Emily (Lauren Dieward), an extremely ill child enrolled in an experimental treatment program at the Transgen Corporation. Working with the sardonic Det. John Kresge (a wonderful John Pyper-Ferguson), Scully uncovers evidence that Mrs. Sim's death was murder, not a suicide, and the police arrest Emily's father. Scully observes two suspicious men at the jail and discovers that Sim has hung himself; again, she suspects a staged suicide. Meanwhile, Scully is struck by Emily's resemblance to Melissa at that age, and a DNA test suggests that Emily is indeed Melissa's daughter. Scully also experiences a series of dreams in which she contemplates the path her life has taken. Scully finally tells her mother she has been left barren. She also decides she wants to adopt Emily, but a social worker tells her that, due to the danger of her job and her recent personal history, adoption may not be possible. Then Scully receives even more shocking news: a second DNA test confirms that Emily is not Melissa's daughter but Scully's.

"Christmas Carol" is one of those episodes where disbelief isn't suspended so much as hung by the neck until dead, where the "real" world has a lost touch with reality. It's a world where overnight DNA tests are performed by an FBI lab that in real



Having apparently taken lessons from Mike Hammer in *KISS ME, DEADLY*, Mulder begins angrily slapping around suspects in "Emily."

life would never do the tests since they are not part of an assigned case, and helpful couriers deliver the results at Christmas. It's a world where Scully can fill out an application to adopt a child and find herself the instant recipient of a home visit by a social worker on Christmas Eve. When the technical details are this sloppy, it's hard to believe in the characters' actions and emotions.

The Scully of this episode has come far from the strong-minded woman of earlier seasons. Everything that's happened to her has driven her into a state resembling anesthetization, until the shock of Emily drives her to, well, tears. You'd think she'd be angry after all that's been done to her, but no. Scully tells the social worker how she is now rethinking her life, but it comes off as an incredibly belated response to abduction, cancer and numerous instances of near-death. There's an unsettling misogynistic whiff to the idea that only after she loses her ability to be a mother would Scully have this realization that maybe it's time for a change. (Would Mulder have the same reaction if he learned he could not father children?) Gillian Anderson has had to cry on cue so much lately that she has perfected Scully-on-the-verge of tears; it's time to move her on to something more challenging.

The dream sequences are handled nicely, but the last one between Melissa and Scully contains a deeply disturbing inconsistency. In it, we learn that Scully received her cross as a Christmas present, although in second season's "Ascension" Mrs. Scully told Mulder she had given it to Dana for her 15th birthday. According to co-writer Frank Spotnitz, the writing staff was aware of the change in story, but felt it dovetailed so nicely with the themes of "Christmas Carol" they decided to use it. It's one thing when inconsistencies creep in by mistake (and there have been some doozies), but to have it done deliberately makes you want to sue for writer malpractice. If they deliberately alter an already-established history, how can the viewer count on anything seen over the past five years?

"Who is the man who would create a life whose only hope is to die?"  
—Scully

## EMILY

12/13/97. Editor: Casey O Rohrs. Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shibban, Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Kim Manners.

Mulder arrives in San Diego to help Scully. In a retread of what is now a familiar X-FILES plot, he is the active half of the partnership, running around and uncovering the nefarious doings of the Conspiracy, while Scully remains at the hospital, this time to oversee treatment for a failing Emily. Mulder tells Scully there are no ordinary records on Emily, since she came into the world in a way that doesn't require such records. He also discovers that the conspiracy is using old women as incubators for hybrid fetuses—an image first seen in "Redux II." Scully also has a court hearing where she presents her case for adopting Emily,

but soon her desire to adopt becomes moot. The only way Emily might survive is if Scully hands her back to the mysterious forces that created her from Scully's ova and an unknown donor's sperm. In fact, who that donor is becomes an interesting question: a boil is discovered on Emily's neck. When a doctor lances it, it spews forth a poisonous green substance identical to that seen in the clones of previous mythology episodes. Emily must be some kind of hybrid herself. Scully refuses to hand Emily over to Transgen, since it would mean a life spent as a human guinea pig. And she cancels all treatment, despite the consequences. Emily dies in a scene that is frighteningly manipulative yet devoid of any true emotion. At Emily's funeral, Scully opens the casket to find the little girl's remains have been stolen; lying inside is the cross she gave Emily in "Christmas Carol."

Like "Christmas Carol," "Emily" presents a situation that simply could not exist in the real world, as Scully would have no authority whatsoever to be making decisions regarding Emily's care. Scully's court hearing happens as magically and instantaneously as her visit from the social worker in the previous episode. The plotting of "Emily" is weak. It fails to follow up on an important point introduced at the beginning of "Christmas Carol": the phone call from Melissa. If Scully really believes her dead sister is calling her, the implications are enormous, yet she never acknowledges them. If it wasn't Melissa, then who was it? Scully expresses no interest in finding out. Mulder's encounters with the shape-shifters and clones repeats information we have learned in past episodes. He wanders around one of the Conspiracy's facilities with no interference whatsoever.

The worst problems concern the characterizations. The episode begins with a ludicrous dream sequence: Scully, clad in a diaphanous dress, trudges through an endless tract of sand, with yet another voice-over explaining how she has always been alone and cut off from people because she's afraid of them dying. This revelation comes out of the blue; since when has Scully felt so isolated? This is really Mulder's emotional territory, but this season he and Scully switch personalities whenever the plot requires. Scully has always had family to support her in ways Mulder's never did; just last week in "Christmas Carol" she bonded with her mother and remembered her sister with warmth and fondness. In "Redux II" she re-established her faith in God. This development just doesn't track.

As for Mulder, he has become a thug. The FBI agent whose smarts and sense of morality, even in a confusing, ambivalent world, were his greatest weapons, now has no compunction about beating up an unarmed man and kicking him while he's down. That the man is Dr. Calderon, the physician in charge of Emily's experimental treatment and thus part of the conspiracy (and unknown to Mulder, apparently a clone), is irrelevant. If only

A victim in "Kitsunegari," a disappointing sequel to the excellent "Pusher," is painted blue by his murderer for symbolic reasons.



there was some clue that Mulder's actions are the result of a hidden rage caused by the lies he believed he's been told and the loss of his quest, but there's not even a hint of this in the script. It's done purely for effect, and it's repulsive. Then there is Mulder's statement at the court hearing, where he reveals to a startled Scully that her ova had been extracted and he had found the facility where they were held in frozen storage. How could he possibly not have told this to Scully before the hearing, rather than surprise her with it in a courtroom setting? His excuse that he was protecting her doesn't wash. How can she even bear to work with him after this? Instead, she reacts with mild anger, then drops it. These are Mulder's lowest moments ever; he's lost all sense of right and wrong.

The episode's use of religious imagery is extraordinarily unsubtle, particularly a dissolve from Scully and Emily to a church's stained glass window depicting the Madonna and Child. Scully's not a woman anymore; she's a martyr and a saint, this dissolve seems to be saying. Her "choice" to let Emily die is no choice at all; there is absolutely no way she could let Emily return to the men who created her. And whereas Mary's decision to bear



In "Emily," despite her best efforts, Scully finds herself unable to save the seriously ill daughter she only recently realized she had.

her child, knowing he was born to be sacrificed, changed the world, Emily's death changes nothing: the experiments will continue with other children. The heavy-handedness of the symbolism grows even worse, when Scully's sister-in-law gives birth just as Emily dies. And her death is peculiarly unaffected, as no real emotional connection was ever established between Scully and Emily.

There's something sadistic about Scully's suffering in this two-parter. She's been abducted, experimented upon, stricken with almost-fatal cancer (albeit nearly pain-free TV cancer). How much more do the writers want to dump on her? It's depressing that the only storyline they can come up to create a "dramatically interesting" situation for Scully, after all she's been through, is to torture her with the unexpected discovery of a dying daughter.

"Okay, you do me a favor, Scully. You give me a call when you think I've come to my senses, all right?"  
—Mulder

## KITSUNEGARI

1/4/98. Editor: Heather MacDougall. Written by Vince Gilligan & Tim Minear. Directed by Daniel Sackheim.

"Pusher" remains one of THE X-FILES' most unforgettable episodes, so the impulse to do a sequel is understandable. But this follow-up is tame compared to the original. The basic premise—that Modell survived both a shot to the head and his fatal brain tumor—is a little hard to swallow, even if he is not quite dead at the end of "Pusher." In "Kitsunegari," Modell (Robert Wisden), is physically and mentally impaired. Or so his

# X-FILES

## VERONICA CARTWRIGHT

*ALIEN actress abducted by The X-Files phenomenon.*

By David Hughes

There is a curious phenomenon which afflicts guest actors on THE X FILES, especially those who have rarely, if ever, watched the show prior to being cast on it. Veronica Cartwright, who guest starred as Cassandra Spender in the two-part story "Patient X" and "The Red and the Black," is its latest victim. Those afflicted find that after their first appearance—even if it is just a one-off guest role—they are instantly hooked, never missing an episode thereafter. "I had seen it a couple of times before," the British-born actress said, speaking from her adoptive home in California, "but in the ones I saw, there were people coming up out of the ground and things like that, and it sort of lost me. But I must say, I have watched it religiously now every week—it's just bizarre!"

Cartwright may not have been following the show, but its creator and executive producer Chris Carter was already a fan of her work, especially INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, which had a tangible influence on THE X FILES (one of its characters is even called Krycek). "He said that for the last five years, he had actually tried to find me a part that would be really good, but that this was the first opportunity that he'd come up with something," Cartwright said of Cassandra Spender, clearly flattered. "He said that these episodes would be the lead-up to how Mulder and Scully are set up for the movie," she adds, "so the idea of this character was basically to get them to the point that they are at when the movie begins."

Since Veronica herself had little idea who the X FILES characters were, the producers gave the actress a number of tapes to watch in order to give her some background. "They gave me the ones that Steve Railsback did—'Ascension' and something else," she says, referring to the second season two-parter in which Duane Barry abducts Scully prior to being abducted himself, a story which, in "Patient X", Cassandra gives as her motivation for contacting



Having appeared in a two-part X-FILES episode, actress Veronica Cartwright now watches the show "religiously...every week."

Mulder. "That's how I began to realize that Mulder was someone who believed in this, and it led me to the doctor [Heitz Werber]." Of course, when Cassandra finally met with Mulder, his beliefs had changed so much, he might have been replaced by a body snatcher. "I know, it's kind of weird," she said. "She's saying, like, 'Don't you feel it?' and he's just blanking her."

Thankfully, Veronica found David Duchovny more agreeable in real life. "He's very funny," she said. "He has the driest sense of humour. They're both terrific," she added, "which, considering the hours people work, is unbelievable. David and Gillian are at the forefront of everything, so their hours are very, very long." Indeed, Veronica wonders how the show will fare following its move from Vancouver to Los Angeles next season. "I don't see how they're going to be able to do that," she confided. "Chris is in love with Vancouver because everything's accessible—nothing's more than an hour or an hour and a half away; and the Canadian dollar is such an advantage because it's a third of the cost." Indeed, Cartwright believes her own episodes would have suffered had they been made in her neighborhood. "We were out on the dam at the end of the first episode, and it was absolutely exquisite," she said by way of example. "Anyway, the [director of photography] went up and put all these lights on top of it. Now, can you

imagine a Los Angeles d.p. wanting to do that? They even turned the dam off while we shot all night, and then turned it back on at the end so that we could get a shot! You'd never have that in LA. Then, for the second show, they recreated the entire dam on a sound stage. They brought in photographs and matched it up, built the facade, and those burning bodies—and it cost over half a million dollars just to build the set. They would never be able to [afford to] do that in LA. They did one I saw with a 747 crash, and one with a submarine, and I caught one where Mulder was on top of a train, and he jumped off and the train exploded... I mean, my God, you can't do that on television,"

she said incredulously. "They really are like movies, and they shoot them in, like, eight days!"

Despite the fact that Cartwright only recently turned 48, her career spans more than 40 years—"Isn't that frightening?" she says. "I know it sounds hideous to me!"—beginning with Kellogg's commercials and ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS in the mid-'50s, when she was barely six years old. (Her actress sister, Angela, started even younger, winning a regular place among the cast of SOMEBODY UP THERE LIKES ME at age three, and later starred in LOST IN SPACE.) Surprisingly, Cartwright was not born into a show business family—her mother was formerly a nurse, and her father was a technical illustrator (though he would later build miniatures for TORA! TORA! TORA! and THE WINDS OF WAR). She only became an actress through a chance meeting with someone who suggested finding the girls an agent. "I don't know what possessed my mom," she says, "but she called her." One of Veronica's earliest television appearances was in a 1962 episode of THE TWILIGHT ZONE ("I Sing the Body Electric"), which she thinks is not so different from THE X FILES. "Aren't they basically the same show?" she said, innocently, "except that they allow for a continuing story, whereas on TWILIGHT ZONE, each one was an individual story?"

Cartwright had appeared in several episodes of ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS by the time Hitchcock cast her as Tippi Hedren's daughter in THE BIRDS (1963). "I had done his TV show, but I had never met Alfred Hitchcock," she recalled, "and I'd never seen one of his films—you think my parents let me see PSYCHO? But he had seen some footage of me on CHILDREN'S HOUR, and he requested meeting me." The two expatriates got along famously. "I used to take him cups of tea every afternoon at 4:30; he used to tell me dirty jokes, [and] he taught me how to cook steak because he said I would need to know that one day."

Cartwright remembers nothing of Hitchcock's well-documented brutality towards Tippi Hedren—"I was never aware [of it]," she said, "but I was twelve years old, so that probably went straight over my head." But she admitted, "I know he could be tortuous. I remember this one scene: all the kids were on this treadmill [to simulate] running from the birds, and he kept saying, 'Faster! Faster!' And, of course, you were like a bowling ball—if one kid went down, you would knock all the others down like bowling pins, so you did your damndest to keep on your feet. I think he got a little vicarious thrill out of watching kids falling off this treadmill, you know?"

Although Cartwright worked in television for the next few years, an 11-year period of unemployment followed, during which she returned to her native England. Eventually returning to Hollywood, she found work opposite Richard Dryfuss (hot off JAWS) and Jessica Harper (SUSPIRIA) in James Toback's X-rated drama INSERTS (1975). With her confidence restored, she was promptly cast as masseuse Nancy Bellicec in Philip Kaufman's 1978 remake of INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, appearing alongside fellow genre veterans Donald Sutherland, Jeff Goldblum, and Leonard McCoy. "INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS was a metaphor for people who don't really want to love, and hate intimacy," she said. "The pod was the metaphor for that, because rather than be hurt, or express the fact that they're really in love with somebody, these people would just rather cut [themselves] off and live in a mediocre world." Veronica's admiration for Kaufman was obviously mutual, since he later cast her as Gus Grissom's wife Betty in his 1983 space race saga THE RIGHT STUFF. "He had grown so much. I mean,



UFO fanatic Cassandra Spender (Veronica Cartwright) ascends toward the heavens in a climactic moment from "The Red and the Black."

he really did seem at ease talking to actors, more than he did with BODY SNATCHERS. He's a wonderful man—a sweetheart—I just love him. He should make another movie so I could work with him again."

Within a year of making INVASION, she was back in England to play the heroine of another intelligent, allegorical monster movie, Ridley Scott's ALIEN. Unfortunately, things didn't go quite according to plan... "I thought I was playing Ripley," she revealed. "That's the only part I'd ever read for." In fact, it was only when Cartwright went for her costume fitting that she found out her role had been switched with unknown actress Sigourney Weaver, and she would now be playing the quivery Lambert, a character much more similar to her BODY SNATCHERS role. "I called my agent back in LA and said, 'Aren't I doing Ripley?' And he said, 'Yes, I think so.' I mean, that's what he thought, too. I even auditioned again when I was in England, and the part that I read for was Ripley. They didn't bother to tell me, and I'd never even looked at the script from the point of view of Lambert, so I had to re-read the script."

Does she have any idea why the switch had been made? "There was a lot of politics going on during the making of that movie," she sighed. "It was Sigourney's first job, but her daddy was a bigwig; there were a lot of favors going on. It just got a bit bigger than anybody had planned, and studio

pressure and egos and everything got involved."

As for the filming itself, Cartwright said, "It was very difficult. When the set was all connected, it was extremely claustrophobic; you got sprayed down with glycerine every day; there was tons and tons of smoke, and Ridley was at this stage where he didn't really care about being able to communicate with the actors—he was more interested in what the little things on Ian Holm's desk looked like. I think in his movies he's matured a little, and he seems to be talking to actors a little more..."

Since making ALIEN, Cartwright has made regular contributions to the genre—"Oh my God," she laughed, "I'm a sci-fi queen!" She played dormant witch Felicia Alden in George Miller's THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK, grappled with fellow X-FILES alumnus Tony Todd ("Sleepless") in CANDYMAN: FAREWELL TO THE FLESH and, more recently, starred in a segment of QUIKSILVER HIGHWAY, the portmanteau

movie-of-the-week starring Christopher Lloyd. "It was a Stephen King story in which a set of mechanical teeth start taking over," she said, fully aware of how ridiculous it sounds. "I got to play this fat person. I had this big 'fat suit' on, and they called me 'trailer butt.' It was hysterical, and how often do you get to do those kind of things?"

Veronica is currently awaiting the release of SPARKLER, "a terrific little movie" in which she plays a stripper named Dottie Delgado. "We shot it in a strip joint, I had my little strip numbers on, and I had an absolute ball," she says. "How often do you get to play a part like that at my age?" In the meantime, Veronica is looking forward to getting back on THE X FILES in an episode which began filming on her 48th birthday, April 20th. "It's the last show [of the fifth series]," she reveals, "so I'm assuming that whatever I've been sucked up by sends me back! Of course, it's all under wraps, so I have no idea what to expect," she adds. "I mean, you think you're dead and then you're not dead? Everybody assumed Cigarette Smoking Man was dead, and yet at the end of the second episode that I did, there he is! And is he the father of my son? And that could make Mulder my stepson..."

So now that Veronica is hooked on THE X FILES, which episodes would be her favorites? "I like the ones which are more

continued on page 124

keepers think. Modell escapes from Lorton Prison and Skinner, Mulder and Scully lead a team of FBI agents to find him. Mulder finds it out of character that Modell leaves everyone he encounters alive, and when a murder victim finally turns up—Nathan Bowman, the lawyer who prosecuted Modell—Mulder suspects Modell did not commit the crime, especially after Modell warns him not to “play the game” instead of “pushing” him to die. Instead, Mulder’s suspicions fall on Linda Bowman (Diana Scarwid), the wife of the murdered prosecutor. Skinner believes Mulder’s mental state has been affected by Modell, relieves him of duty and orders him to go home, but Mulder continues the investigation on his own. Modell appears at the safe house where Linda is being sheltered and Skinner, believing Modell has a gun (it’s really his cocked finger), shoots him. Another death (Modell’s physical therapist) and a realization that Linda has “pushed” him convinces Mulder that Linda is the culprit. He tails her to a warehouse, where she “pushes” him into thinking that Scully, who has followed him, is really Linda. On gut instinct, he shoots “Scully”—who turns out to be Linda, who is not only Modell’s long-lost sister but is suffering from an identical brain tumor.

“Kitsunegari”—Japanese for “fox hunt,”—has its pleasures. The image of the murdered Nathan Bowman covered in cerulean blue paint is particularly striking. The moment where Mulder’s suspicions fall on Linda is spooky, and the scene in the hospital where Linda stops the heart of the suffering Modell is sensitively performed. But the basic concept of the long-lost sister out for revenge is a cheesy one. And it’s hard to believe that Modell has suddenly turned into such a nice guy that he will break out of prison to stop his sister and warn Mulder; he’s become a toothless character. Linda, despite a good performance from Scarwid, doesn’t come close to matching the Modell of “Pusher” as a mesmerizing villain. Nor is there the drive towards the inevitable showdown, the meeting of “worthy adversaries,” that so energized “Pusher.” “Kitsunegari” is afflicted by a sense of “been there, done that.” Also, David Duchovny must have had a bad week at work; at times Mulder comes off as inappropriately hostile and sarcastic that you get the feeling the actor’s own frustrations (whatever they might have been) have bled over into his performance.

“He’s been in therapy for his anger since 1995.”  
—Scully

“That could be me.”  
—Mulder

## SCHIZOGENY ★★

1/11/98. Editor: Lynne Willingham. Written by Jessica Scott & Mike Wollaefer. Directed by Ralph Hemecker.

The plot of “Schizogeny” is more tangled than the episode’s paranormal root system, but underneath lie some powerful themes. The case of a teenage boy, Bobby Rich (Chad Lindberg) brings Mulder and Scully to Coats Grove, Michigan,

**For all its flaws, the killer tree roots story of “Schizogeny” was more satisfying than most of the episodes seen in season five.**



Diana Scarwid guest stars in “Kitsunegari,” as the vengeful sister of “The Pusher’s” Modell, whose psychic power she shares.

where Bobby is accused of murdering his stepfather, Phil, by forcing him to ingest 12 pounds of mud in the family’s failing hazelnut orchard. Mulder believes Bobby to be innocent. He and Scully find that Bobby and another teenager named Lisa Baiocchi (Katherine Isabelle) have been undergoing therapy with a local psychologist, Karin Matthews (Sarah-Jane Redmond, memorable as the demonic Lucy Butler in the MILLENNIUM episode “Lamentations”). Karin believes that Bobby and Lisa are both abused children and she has been working with them on “empowering” themselves. When Lisa’s father is killed, the physical evidence causes Mulder to theorize that somehow the root systems of the orchards have become empowered, too, and are responsible for dragging the two men to their deaths. And the conduit of the power is Karin, whose own abuse at the hands of her father caused her to develop a split personality and project onto Bobby and Lisa the fantasy that they were also abused.

“Schizogeny” tip-toes towards excellence, but refuses to go all the way. Imagine PSYCHO meeting the legend of the Fisher King. Karin Matthews is both Norman Bates and a female Fisher King (or should that be Fisher Queen?). Her identity is split between her own and her father’s, she keeps her father’s body in the root cellar, and rage is expressed in the barrenness of the land and the murderous actions of the roots. Director Ralph Hemecker (who did such a splendid job directing “The Curse of Frank Black,” one of the best MILLENNIUM episodes this season) catches all the bleakness of this story with numerous shots of stark, leafless branches silhouetted against the frosty nighttime sky.

There is another level to this episode that also works well: Mulder’s identification with and sympathy for the put-upon Bobby, a kid he describes as “hard to love.” (He could be talking about himself.) Bobby’s relationship with his irritated stepfather (as well as Lisa’s with her equally irritated father) might have served as a vehicle for Mulder to reflect on his own relationship with his cold and distant father. While there are a few lines in the script to indicate Mulder’s identification with Bobby, the link between the two arises mostly out of Duchovny’s performance, in the passion with which he invests Mulder’s belief in Bobby’s innocence and acknowledges their similarity. But the episode steps back from taking it any farther; nothing really new is revealed about Mulder through this case. Karin is also handled poorly, in that she ends up becoming a complete monster whose fate is destruction. And destroyed she is; she is decapitated by an axe-wielding man who seems to be the guardian of the orchards (this character is never developed either). It’s hideous and gratuitous, even if her death saves Mulder and Bobby; surely she could have been stopped some other way. Even Norman Bates survived at the end of PSYCHO. There are scenes that could come from a grade-B horror movie: for instance, Lisa foolishly descending into Karin’s basement when anyone with an ounce of sense

would be exiting speedily out the front door. Also, there’s little ambiguity about this X-file: we see the roots moving; we see them responding to Karin. There’s little left to wonder about. Still, considering the surface quality of many of the episodes this season, “Schizogeny,” for all its flaws, delivers something a little more satisfying to chew over.

**“Like evidence of conjury or the black arts or shamanism, divination, wicca or any kind of pagan or neo-pagan practice? Charms, cards, familiars, bloodstones or hex signs or any of the ritual tableaux associated with the occult? Santeria, voodoo, macumba, any high or low magic?”**

—Scully

## CHINGA ★

2/8/98. Editor: Casey O Rohrs. Written by Stephen King & Chris Carter. Directed by Kim Manners.

“Chinga” is a major disappointment, considering that the script was co-written by one of the most popular and prolific horror authors of our time and television’s top purveyor of millennial chills. Once again, Mulder and Scully are not working together (thanks to the shooting schedule of THE X-FILES movie). Scully is on vacation in a Maine fishing village, but before she can even check into her motel, she comes upon a scene of self-inflicted mass mutilation including one fatality. She reluctantly assists the local police chief, Captain Jack Bonsaint (Larry Musser) in investigating the incident, occasionally calling a bored Mulder to ask his opinion. The townspeople believe a young widow, Melissa Turner (Susannah



“Chinga,” horror novelist Stephen King’s collaboration with Chris Carter, is a major disappointment—a tired killer doll story.

Hoffman) is at fault; one woman proclaims Melissa to be a witch and a whore who has passed on her cursed lineage to her autistic daughter Polly (Jenny-Lynn Hutcheson). The real malefactor isn’t Melissa or Polly, but Polly’s doll. If Polly doesn’t get her way, the doll’s eyes pop open, she utters a catch phrase (“Let’s have fun!” or “I want to play!”) and mayhem ensues. An ever more desperate Melissa, who has premonitory visions of the episode’s various victims, tries everything she can to stop the doll, including fleeing town, but at each turn she is thwarted. Finally she nails every window and door shut and tries to burn down her house but again the doll intervenes, just as Scully and Captain Bonsaint arrive. Scully grabs the doll, thrusts it into a microwave, and saves the day.

“Chinga” isn’t scary in the least, but it is unintentionally funny (except for the scenes with Mulder, which are meant to be funny but aren’t). Imagine if Pusher were a doll—that’s the premise. Like Pusher, the doll can force people to hurt themselves—even kill themselves. And since we know the doll is evil, there’s not much more to the episode other than watching people get killed in various gruesome ways while Scully and Vonsant finally collect enough information to lead them back to the Turner residence in the nick of time. If





With makeup borrowed from Daryl Hannah in **BLADE RUNNER**, Kristin Lehman's Esther Nairn perpetuates the image of hackers as cool rebels.

the script made clear that the doll served as a conduit for Polly's will, that might have added a level of genuine horror, but this remains unclear. The double ending is ludicrous. First, the doll wills Melissa into hammering her own head, and while Scully tries to wrest the doll from Polly, Bonsaint does nothing to stop Melissa. And then, in a coda, the burned doll is once again fished from the sea and announces, "I want to play." Here we go again. There are some familiar King touches; seemingly innocent lines of dialogue and song lyrics turn menacing when repeated in conjunction with the horrific events. But there is none of the specificity of Maine's small town life that make King's books so vivid.

The characterizations of Mulder and Scully are muddled. Since Scully is off on her own, she must represent both her usual viewpoint as well as Mulder's. It is exceedingly strange to hear her suggesting to Bonsaint that they should consider "extreme possibilities," although Anderson makes this switch as credible as she can. Actually, it's strange that after five years of witnessing extreme possibilities Scully isn't already in Mulder's camp, but since she's always stuck to the scientific explanation, no matter what, her taking this position now seems forced—you can see the hand of the writer. And Mulder, via phone, starts offering scientific explanations; suddenly he's Scully, since Scully is now Mulder. The writers should have just given Duchovny the week off, rather than present the Mulder of "Chinga." This Mulder is a fool. It's not a pretty sight. He's pledged not to work for one weekend, but he can find nothing else to occupy his time. So he bangs his basketball out of boredom and tells Scully it's construction work; he hangs around the office anyway; he spends who knows how much time sharpening pencils and throwing them into the ceiling (and the pencils fall down on him, a pathetic gag). Again, if only there were some hint that the loss of Mulder's quest has caused this mindless behavior, but it's impossible to glean this either from the script or Duchovny's performance. Mulder is played simply for sitcom-level yucks. And that's the only scary thing about "Chinga."

"Why don't you let us ask the questions?"

—Scully

"Why don't you bite me?"

—Esther Nairn

## KILL SWITCH

★★★

2/15/98. Editor: Heather MacDougall. Written by William Gibson & Tom Maddox. Directed by Rob Bowman.

"Kill Switch" is another kind of Frankenstein story. Anonymous phone calls send assorted drug dealers and criminals as well as a team of federal agents to an all-night Washington, D.C., diner; a massive shoot-out ensues in which everyone is killed. One of the victims is an innocent customer, Donald Gelman (Patrick Keating), a reclusive computer genius who invented the Internet. The

man's e-mail leads Mulder and Scully to "Invisigoth," a Gelman protegee named Esther Nairn (Kristin Lehman). She explains that Gelman had created a sentient artificial intelligence which he unloaded onto the Net, to see how it evolved, but now the A.I. intends to destroy its creators, including her and another colleague, her lover David Markham. Nairn is in constant danger: whenever the A.I. locates her, it programs a satellite laser beam at her. She and Scully and Mulder barely escape one such blast. The CD-ROM Mulder and Scully found in Gelman's laptop is a "kill switch," a virus Gelman created to destroy the A.I. But the computer intelligence has become so powerful that the only way to apply the kill switch is to upload it at the physical node that serves as the A.I.'s home base. Mulder tracks down the home node at an abandoned chicken farm, while Scully and a handcuffed Esther search for David. They find his house in ruins and realize the A.I. found him first. Entering the farmhouse, Mulder is captured by the A.I.'s mechanical arms and subjected to a virtual reality scenario in which the A.I. tries to lure from him the location of the kill switch. Scully and Esther rescue Mulder by giving the A.I. the kill switch. Mulder and Scully escape the house, but Esther remains, deliberately strapping herself into the embrace of the A.I., which gives her what she wants: a physical death but a metaphysical immortality, with her consciousness uploaded into the Net, where she believes she will be reunited with David.

"Kill Switch" marks the welcome return of director Rob Bowman, back from the X-FILES movie. It's a great improvement over THE X-FILES' earlier A.I. episode, first season's "Ghost in the Machine." Bowman's direction is fast-paced and energetic, and the episode conveys a disturbing weirdness that has been missing from much of this season. The plot isn't without its flaws—it's illogical that Mulder would put a CD-ROM into his car CD player; he'd put it into his computer. And why not simply cut the A.I.'s power supply? Even so, the story is suspenseful and gripping, as Mulder, Scully and Esther try to elude the A.I. and locate its home base before it can kill them. While the underlying theme of the episode, whether artificial intelligence is life, is a familiar one to any SF fan, it's treated very well in this context. Esther, with her goth raccoon-eyes makeup, tight black leather vest and pants, is the computer scientist as punk. She's a woman with major bad attitude, but underneath it all she is shattered by the loss of Gelman and Markham. Kristin Lehman catches the mingled toughness and heartbreak of the character, a woman so desperate for the connection she hasn't experienced in life that she is willing to die to achieve it.

Mulder's virtual reality experience is a highlight of the episode. It's campy and silly and horrifying, revelatory both of his desires (beauteous bimbo nurses) and his fears (beauteous bimbo nurses and amputation... Freud could have a field day with this) and his subconscious attitudes

In "Kill Switch," Mulder's search for a dangerous artificial intelligence leads him to a techno-geek whose mind has been absorbed into the machine.



towards Scully (she's his doctor, she'll kick butt for him, but there is also the fear of betrayal). Duchovny plays this for all its worth, and Kate Luyben as the seductive yet threatening nurse is a delight. Unfortunately, Scully is played too harshly in the first half of the episode, protesting far too much when it's clear she and Mulder and Esther are being targeted by the A.I. She warms up later on, especially during the scene when Esther believes David has been killed.

"Erotic...yeah."

—Sheriff Hartwell, looking at Scully

## BAD BLOOD

★★1/2

2/22/98. Editor: Lynne Willingham. Written by Vince Gilligan. Directed by Cliff Bole.

Night. A boy is running through the woods, screaming for help. In pursuit is a mysterious figure. The boy stumbles and the pursuer catches up with him—and pounds a stake through the boy's heart. A voice is heard: "Mulder?" It's Mulder who has killed the boy, convinced he's a



A pizza-delivering bloodsucker prepares to take a bite out of an innocent victim in "Bad Blood," a tale of good ol' boy vampires in a small town.

vampire, but when Scully catches up with him, she pulls off the fanged teeth: they're plastic fakes. Back at the FBI, Mulder and Scully know they're in trouble, facing a lawsuit from the boy's family, and for Mulder, possible criminal prosecution. Their report is due to Skinner, and Mulder wants to know if Scully saw what he saw. So Scully gives her version of the events, and then Mulder gives his. The case opens with Mulder telling Scully they're going to Chaney, Texas (an homage no doubt to silent horror actor Lon Chaney), to find out why cattle and one unlucky tourist have been left drained of blood. While Scully autopsies the first tourist, Mulder checks out the local cemetery with the local sheriff, Hartwell (Luke Wilson), under the assumption that vampires would return there. A second tourist is murdered and an exhausted, hungry Scully drags herself back to the funeral home for another autopsy. The lab results show that both victims had been drugged, and both had eaten pizza. Scully suddenly realizes that the pizza she had ordered at the motel had been delivered just as she was leaving for the second autopsy and that Mulder would be eating it. She races back to find him drugged and the pizza delivery boy, Ronnie (Patrick Renna), also in the room. She shoots; Ronnie escapes; she and Mulder (who recovers quickly) give chase, ending in Mulder's killing the boy. Mulder tells Scully he saw Ronnie's eyes glowing green and that he was unaffected by two shots from Scully's gun. Scully saw only normal eyes and feels she missed Ronnie. But before they can hand in their report, Skinner orders them back to Texas, because Ronnie's corpse has disappeared and the coroner has a bite on his neck. Turns out the vampires were real after all—Mulder finds Ronnie sleeping in a coffin and is attacked by the

# X-FILES

## THE GREAT LINDALA

*Pulling monsters out of a hat on a weekly schedule.*

By Dennis Fischer

One of the biggest difficulties facing a weekly genre show is the task of preparing the elaborate makeup effects regularly needed. While features can devote months to preparation time, the television makeup artist typically has only a few days. When THE X-FILES first started, makeup effects chores were farmed out piecemeal, so that when a hairy bigfoot variant was needed for "The Jersey Devil," a Greg Cannom werewolf outfit from a previous project would be dusted off and sent to the location.

However, it soon became clear that a regular on-site makeup effects crew would be needed. Beginning with the eighth episode, "Ice," that task fell to Ontario native Toby Lindala, who had studied under Dick Smith. His company, Lindala Makeup Effects Inc., has handled the makeup effects work for the show through its first five seasons, as well as working on Carter's MILLENIUM series once it started.

Lindala and his co-workers have been responsible for creating the look and effects for some of the series' most memorable characters, from "The Host"'s outré Fluke-man and the grisly revelation in "Sanginarium," to the "Post-Modern Prometheus" episode's Mutato, which combined elements of Siamese twins, the Frankenstein monster, THE FLY, and Rick Baker's work on THE FUNHOUSE.

In fact, Lindala has submitted his work on "Mutato" for a hoped-for Emmy nomination. "It was a really exciting piece," he said. "It was actual prosthetic work where we were creating a character in conjunction with the actor. We put all sorts of animatronics into it. As an audio-animatronics prosthetic piece, it was the big culmination of a lot of skills. Then there was a lot of satisfaction to contributing to the Frankenstein syndrome.

[We] had a wonderful time with the actor, Chris Owens, making the character come to life. It was utilized as an actual character in the show, not simply a quick one scene effect. That was fun."

One daring move was filming "The Post-Modern Prometheus" in black and white. "I think it helps the prosthetic a lot because it is difficult to work in a foam piece that long and not recognize it as a painted, opaque, false translucency," comments Lindala. "That was the saving grace of the episode." Lindala was especially careful to airbrush the prosthetics and then film them on black and white video to check the look to see whether the pieces would have believable depth and look natural alongside the actor's skin.

Mutato was also unusual in that Lindala's team was able to begin designing it earlier than usual. "The design reflected a lot of the classic makeup creations that inspired myself and a lot of guys in the shop to get into the business," noted Lindala. "We started drawing it about a pretty much approved concept. We went through 10-15 drawings and then color renditions about a month-and-a-half prior to even prepping the episode.

"At first [Mutato's] mouths were con-

Besides FRANKENSTEIN, the makeup in "The Post-Modern Prometheus" also suggests THE FLY, THE FUNHOUSE, and THE ELEPHANT MAN.



Toby Lindala has created some of THE X-FILES' most memorable monsters, including the fifth season FRANKENSTEIN take-off, The Great Mutato.

nected, but then we separated them to save complexity in the application and the build, and to play the full second character like the fellow in China who had the co-joined brother, sort of a Siamese aspect, but to separate it further. [We wanted to] work in a whole other type of character reference, working in that homeotic aspect, the genetic alteration. That's where it kind of went zany on us. I was looking forward to getting into some of the exciting prosthetic animatronic work, getting this character to work some motors in with the actor." (Motors were used to manipulate parts of the makeup and give greater expression to the artificial head). "By the time we got to the episode, we received a script, about a regular week and half previous to starting to shoot the episode, and we talked about inserting color early on, and the concept started to change a bit. They threw in a lot of the FLY aspect, so we had to go back to the drawing board and rework our drawings. At first it was too human-looking, and we ended up redesigning.

"We got the actor pretty early, but just due to getting our concepts redone, we ended up doing another 20 drawings or so before we got to where we really wanted to take it. The animatronic work had to be done in a day and a half, so that was tweaked further on the set. There are only five motors in



Dmitri in "The Red and the Black"—a victim of that oily alien sludge that infects humans, his eyes and mouth sealed to prevent further spread. Makeup design and execution by Lindala Makeup Effects.



the piece, but really tight to do in a day and a half. It all worked out well, thank Christ."

One Lindala sequence that a second unit manager called "the most X-FILE-ian moment" he had ever seen was a sequence in "Sanginarium" where the doctor played by Richard Beymer tugs at his hairline and pulls back his forehead, revealing a cross-work of muscle tissue underneath. "We did a two stage overlapping prosthetic and it worked out really well," recalls Lindala. "Basically, there was a false forehead on and a really thin false muscle tissue forehead underneath, but we put the prosthetic down and cut right close to the edge, so we had a little bit of thickness to it. At first, he [Beymer] was supposed to reach up with his hand and peel back his skin, but he got inspired and didn't want to block [the view] of the gag, so he used this medical tool and threw this whole other coldness into the gag, and allowed the gag to work a lot better physically. He reached up and started peeling it back, and then grabbed it and flipped over the skin and peels it back to about his eyes.

"We had talked about doing this whole

**“We look at the notes sent over [by network censors], but generally we do it all anyway. Chris [Carter] will work it out in the cutting.”**

**—Makeup Artist Toby Lindala—**

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE-type face peel, but that would be really limiting in terms of what you could use. We were told about concern at the network. As soon as you get to the eyes, you have to figure out what to do with the lids, were we going to show these blank eyes sitting in their sockets, and Kim said, 'As soon as you get to the eyes, the network is not going to allow us to show that anyway, so just give me as far as the eyes and we'll play that nice and slow.' It worked beautifully because the actor could still fully emote from the rest of his face, conveying the pain. It was a great, great gag."

Of course, a big part of Lindala's workload has been the various aliens that have appeared on the show—eight different designs by Lindala's count, varying in form from prosthetics to pullover pieces, with some more human to highlight the hybrid storyline and others less so. The fifth season was a little easier as the show reused aliens made for the fourth season, but Lindala admits to getting a little burned-out on creating aliens, though that is part of what attracted him into doing the show in the first place.

From the start, X FILES creator and executive producer Chris Carter has been closely involved in conceptualizing and approving all alien designs. "Chris has always got a really direct concept behind what these aliens are referenced from, which is really exciting for me," said Lindala. "We've always been going with the classic grey reference that you see so much in the media. We always try to stick to what we find in abductees' reports to try to keep it definitely referenced to reality, but to varying degrees."

According to Lindala, Carter stays involved with every aspect of the design. "He's got a really clear vision of what he

wants to see when you get into the design process. For some of the scripts, especially in the fourth and fifth seasons, we've worked more directly with the specific writer of the episode, but of course Chris is always overseeing all of that. He's always been great that way. He's very demanding. He pushes for you to come up with what he needs within this incredible schedule constraint. We have to just admire the man, and give him everything we've got, because he's doing the same. He's a total workaholic and he puts every ounce of his being into it, so how can you not do the same? It's quite exciting."

One alien design was based on the real-life corpse of the 2000 year-old, somewhat cryogenically frozen (or rather mummified and frozen) Ice Man, but with an alien twist that sets up the story as being a hoax. Said Lindala, "We've done a bit of everything. We had a really fun design for an episode called 'Nisei' (the episode with the videotape of an alien autopsy), which was a pullover mask but with a lot of human aspect, sort of like an altered alien skull with human eyes sunken back in it. You don't see a lot of him in the episode, but the shots are just beautiful and are lit just wonderfully. It's a 14 year-old girl with these 18 dome black contacts in, which give the suggestion of these alien eyes that have lessened in size but still have that deep black character that is referenced on abductee reports.

"From the same episode, we had to do a pit of 50 dead aliens, which was quite a challenge [to create] in about three or four days. We scrambled and put together a lot of previous designs, some of them made for 'Paper Clip' [the episode where Scully and Mulder learn the truth about Mulder's father's involvement with a government UFO cover-up], just foamed out old molds and ground old pieces and reassembled them for 25 bodies that were covered in lime and were decomposing underneath these newly executed hybrid experiments. We ran 25 new pullover heads and gloves for kids who stood in front of the firing line. Sometimes it's pretty fast and furious, but it worked well for the shot."

Garnett McFee and Rachel Griffin have been the shop's project coordinators for the last two years, and Lindala credits them

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In "Bad Blood," Scully finds herself attracted to a local sheriff (Luke Wilson), who turns out to be one of the townful of vampires.

entire town of vampires, while Scully is given knock-out drops by the handsome vampire Sheriff Hartwell. The next morning the town is deserted. End of story.

The tone of "Bad Blood" is primarily comic, and it is chock-full of truly amusing moments, many of them arising out of the juxtaposition of the differing stories offered by Mulder and Scully. Duchovny and Anderson have a field day with this material. Particularly charming is Scully's goofy grin when she gets a look at the quietly alluring Sheriff Hartwell. Her impatience during the autopsies, with the jump cuts as she weighs various bloody organs, is a hoot. The two versions of the motel scene, especially Scully's version, when she is relaxing on her "magic fingers" bed, are also wonderfully funny. And it's worth the price of admission to hear a drugged Mulder crooning the theme to SHAFT and Duchovny's startled objection to Scully's tale that he did no such thing. One gag—Mulder hanging on for dear life to a runaway RV—doesn't work at all; Mulder looks like a bumbling fool instead of a smart man caught in an absurd situation.

However, there are serious and disturbing issues underlying the humor, particularly in how Mulder and Scully perceive each other. In Scully's story, Mulder comes off as overbearing (if dedicated to the job) and belittling. In Mulder's story, Scully comes off as hostile and uncooperative. Their relationship seems to be a strangely passive-aggressive one (particularly on Scully's part). They complain to each other, but skirt around any meaningful dialogue. Their mutual befuddlement at the end does not signal a resolution to their conflicts. The premise—the reason why Mulder and Scully recount their stories to each other—is also problematic. Mulder has killed a teenage boy, a boy who he thought was a vampire but apparently is not. Instead of experiencing guilt and taking responsibility for his actions, he is worried about an impending lawsuit from Ronnie's family and about his career. He's ready to blame his actions on the drug (even though he had recovered enough to run pell mell through the woods, knock down a strong teen, restrain the desperately struggling boy, and pound that stake into his heart). It's Mulder at his most thoughtless and despicable; in fact, it's hard to believe it's Mulder at all.

The episode collapses in the fourth act, when all the ambiguity vanishes. At least most of the usual vampire clichés are avoided; they're nice vampires, who just want to be good neighbors. The sheriff even apologizes for Ronnie's bad behavior, just as Scully realizes she's been drugged. And writer Vince Gilligan introduces some amusing vampire lore that's seldom if ever been filmed before, like an obsessive need to count dropped seeds and untie shoelaces.

The guest cast is excellent, particularly Luke Wilson as Hartwell. Wilson manages to portray

both the competent lawman (if you believe Scully's story) and a dim-witted hick (if you believe Mulder's story).

**"One more anal-probing, gyro-pyro levitating ectoplasm alien anti-matter story and I'm going to take out my gun and shoot somebody."**  
—Mulder

#### PATIENT X ★★1/2

3/1/98. Editor: Casey O Rohrs. Written by Chris Carter & Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Kim Manners.

"Patient X" is the first half of one of a solid two-parter. Krycek (Nicholas Lea) and Marita Covarrubias (Laurie Holden) face off at the site of a mass incineration in Kazakhstan, former Soviet Union. Krycek captures a boy, Dmitri (Alex Shostak, Jr.) who witnessed first a spaceship, then the slaughter carried out by men whose eyes and mouths have been sewn shut. Krycek subjects Dmitri to one of the black oil tests, orders his eyes and mouth sewn shut to prevent the oil from escaping, and takes him on board a ship bound to New York. Krycek wants to deal with the Consortium; he has possession of a vaccine that will cure the black oil infection and Dmitri is an important witness to the aliens' activities. The Consortium desperately wants the vaccine, because it means they will have a way to fight the aliens who plan to colonize the planet. They also believe there is a rebellion growing among the aliens and that the killing in Kazakhstan was carried out by the rebels to prevent the beginnings of colonization. They debate if they should ally themselves with this new force. Everyone's plans go awry when Marita sneaks Dmitri off the ship and he escapes from her, leaving her in a black oil-induced coma. Meanwhile, Mulder is attending a conference of UFO enthusiasts and abductees at which he announces they are all dupes; the alien stories are cover-ups for massive build-ups in military spending. Mulder encounters Dr. Heinz Werber (Jim Jansen), the hypnoterapist who years ago had helped him recall his memories of Samantha's abduction. He takes Mulder to meet "Patient X," a woman named Cassandra Spender (Veronica Cartwright, of ALIEN), who states she has been abducted many times and knows she will be abducted again. At the FBI, Scully is accosted by Agent Jeffrey Spender (Chris Owens), Cassandra's son, who asks her to keep Mulder away from his mother, because she is a very disturbed woman. But Scully herself cannot stay away, because she, like Cassandra, feels the call to be somewhere—a call she believes originates from the chip in her neck. Dozens of people converge on Skyland Mountain in Virginia (where Duane Barry took Scully) and like the people in Kazakhstan, are burned to death by the "faceless" men. This latest mass death does not deter Scully, or Cassandra, from a third rendezvous at a bridge in Pennsylvania,

**Scully, having been mysteriously drawn to a gathering of other abductees, looks up at the approach of what could be a UFO in "Patient X."**



where once again, the men with the sewn faces appear to set fire to the crowd.

"Patient X" is a rare episode in that it actually advances the X-FILES mythology, with the news of a vaccine to combat the black oil, the revelation that the aliens really do intend to colonize earth but a rebellion has caused an unexpected advance in the timetable, and that the Consortium wants to fight the colonization. Could the Consortium possibly be...the good guys? This alien-resistance scheme throws the show squarely into a hard science fiction scenario which could turn schlocky. It's a double-edged sword, because THE X-FILES' appeal has always lain in the ambiguity of its do-the-aliens-exist-or-not underpinnings, but at the same time the audience needs some answers. So far, so good, but let's hope THE X-FILES doesn't metamorphasize into V.

"Patient X" indulges itself with too many repellent images: the "faceless men," clear shots of charred corpses, and close-ups of Dmitri's beaten and bloody face stitched shut (reminiscent of similarly maimed faces in the pilot of MILLENNIUM). The camera seems to take a perverse delight in death, pain and mutilation, with the distressing effect of numbing the viewer to the horror.



Chris Owens, who played the young Cigarette Smoking Man last season, shows up in "Patient X" as Agent Jeffrey Spender. Family resemblance?

Nicholas Lea as Krycek is an immense asset to this two-parter; the actor is so dynamic that his mere appearance jacks up the intensity level, although not even he can make credible the silly "rough necking" scene between Krycek and Marita. Veronica Cartwright is completely believable and very poignant as Cassandra Spender, and her scenes with a confused, doubting Scully are wonderful. Considering her name, Mulder should pay more attention to what she has to say. Chris Owens, who was terrific as the young Cigarette Smoking Man in last season's "Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man" and survived "Post-Modern Prometheus," is stuck with a real drip of a character, the kind of smug guy who needs a good, swift kick in the butt. The episode's main problem lies with the handling of Mulder's belief—or lack of it—in what used to be the cornerstone of his worldview: the existence of aliens and UFOs. Since the end of "Redux II," he's either been a goof-off or his usual monster-hunting self, with nary a shred of the self-doubt you'd expect to be haunting him. Now here he is as a full-blown skeptic, willing to tell an entire auditorium of people they're all fools for believing in aliens. How did he get to this point? And why? Krietschgau never offered any solid proof and finding Scully's chip in a government facility means little, when he's known all along of government involvement in the alien cover-up conspiracy. He—as well as the audience—has never seen evidence to support such a drastic change in position, and so he just looks foolish, especially since the next scene shows the Consortium discussing alien colonization.



A flashback in "The Red and the Black" shows Scully's memory of what happened in "Patient X": she watches as Cassandra Spender is abducted.

"Don't let yourself be used."

—Agent Spender to Scully

### THE RED AND THE BLACK

★★★

3/8/98. Editor: Heather MacDougall. Written by Chris Carter & Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Chris Carter.

For once, a second half of a two-parter that is as strong as the first half. The episode opens at a cabin perched on a snowy mountain, where an unknown man is writing a letter of reconciliation to his son; the envelope is addressed to Agent Spender. Scully survives the attack on the bridge, but she is in shock and hospitalized. Spender is furious and upset that his mother has disappeared. When Scully awakens, she remembers nothing of the event, not even her trip to Pennsylvania. Mulder tells her that x-rays reveal all the dead had implanted chips. She tells him that without any memories, she cannot follow his theories. She agrees to be hypnotized by Dr. Werber, and in the session relates a shocking story of the approach of a huge, brilliantly lit spaceship, its disappearance, the approach of another ship which draws up Cassandra Spender in a beam of light; and finally, the arrival of the facially mutilated men who begin to set the people ablaze. The Consortium tests the vaccine on the comatose Marita but with no success. Airmen at Wiekamp Air Force Base capture the survivor of a crash on one of the base's fields; the Consortium believe him to be one of the alien rebels. There is division among the Consortium members; the Well Manicured Man is for working with the rebels; the Elder (Don Williams) thinks they must wait. Spender tells Scully that as a boy he believed his mother's stories but now he knows they are not true. Krycek shows up at Mulder's apartment and tells him about the alien rebellion and that a rebel is being held at Wiekamp. The fourth act is an action sequence: Mulder and Scully drive to Wiekamp, Mulder sneaks onto the truck holding the alien rebel, but before he can rescue him, the Bounty Hunter (Brian Thompson) from "Colony" and "End Game" and "Talitha Cumi" appears with his deadly ice pick. The next thing Mulder knows, he's alone in the truck and air force personnel are swarming all over. Marita seems to be on the road to recovery, although she's still comatose, and the letter addressed to Spender is returned to sender: the Cigarette Smoking Man.

We don't learn all that much more in "The Red and the Black" than in "Patient X," but it serves to deepen the storyline introduced in the first episode and to make Mulder's and Scully's positions ever more shaky. Krycek's development is rather puzzling, however. The man has been through more personality changes than Joanne Woodward in *THE THREE FACES OF EVE*. Here he abandons his power of position in Russia and softens up enough to warn Mulder about the alien invasion. There is no explanation whatsoever for Krycek's turnaround.

However, two of the scenes are genuine X-

FILES classics. The first is Scully's hypnosis scene, in which Scully is virtually orgasmic in the intensity of her recall (Anderson is marvelous). The camera work and special effects of the flashbacks are gorgeous, especially the shot of Cassandra floating up to the ship in a swirl of blue light and dust, and the overhead shots of a stupefied Scully. The other scene is the confrontation between Mulder and Krycek in Mulder's apartment, where Krycek delivers his warning to a furious but helpless Mulder (Krycek has him pinned), topped off by an electrifying gesture: Krycek seals his message by kissing Mulder's cheek. Krycek is a kind of trickster figure: he's dangerous and untrustworthy, yet he cannot be discounted. Mulder's silent confusion and despair after Krycek leaves is one of the few moments for him this year that is genuine in its emotion. "The Red and the Black" works very well in twisting Mulder and Scully round and round; Mulder experiences doubt at the end of the episode about his new-found skepticism; Scully feels she witnessed something out of this world at the bridge, but then begins to have doubts about what she recalled. It's also good to see the two partners working together, even communicating their feelings, which they do so rarely. Still, one wonders what the writers are doing with Krycek.

And then there's the return of the Cigarette Smoking Man—not exactly a surprise. Now he's Spender's father, the man who abandoned Cassandra and drove her to insanity (so Spender says). This is where *THE X-FILES* turns into soap opera. First Samantha and Mrs. Mulder, now Spender, and Cassandra. The Cigarette Smoking Man must have been the Conspiracy Casanova of his day.

"Do you know what an X-File is?"

—Dales to Mulder

### TRAVELERS

★

3/29/98. Editor: Lynne Willingham. Written by John Shiban & Frank Spotnitz. Directed by William A. Graham.

The year is 1990. In rural Wisconsin, a sheriff and a landlady enter a house to evict an elderly tenant named Edward Skur. They find a desiccated body in the bathtub, Skur attacks the sheriff, who shoots him. Skur dies muttering the name Mulder. In Washington, D.C., Mulder, still a profiler with the FBI Behavioral Sciences Unit, calls on retired FBI agent Arthur Dales (Darren McGavin), who had opened the original file on Skur back in 1952. Mulder is curious why his name was the last thing Skur said. A reluctant Dales tells Mulder what really happened so long ago. The rest of the episode takes place in a prolonged flashback. It's the era of the McCarthy hearings and Communist witch hunts. The young Dales (Frederic Lane) and his oddly-named partner Hayes Michel (Brian Leckner) arrest Ed Skur (Garret Dillahunt) on charges of contempt for failing to appear before a Congressional committee. Skur is found hung in

**They Came From Within: a parasitic alien organism, implanted in a human being as part of an experiment, causes havoc in "Travelers."**



his cell shortly thereafter, but Dales spots him alive that night. He gives chase but is terrified when Skur overcomes him and crab-like legs emerge from Skur's mouth. But before anything else can happen, a neighbor calls out and Skur runs off. Justice Department attorney Roy Cohn (David Moreland) calls Dales in and orders him to amend his report and eliminate Skur's name in the interests of national security. While investigating yet another homicide, Dales receives a mysterious message to meet someone at a bar; the contact turns out to be a young State Department official named Mulder (Dean Aylesworth), who warns Dales that Skur and two other men are not Communists but patriots and victims of "xeno-transplantation," surgery to graft another species into the body, a procedure Nazi doctors experimented with during the war. Dales is called into a meeting with FBI director Hoover (David Fredericks), who cryptically tells him that we must do the things even our enemies are ashamed to do to ensure our survival. Dales, Mulder, and a third man arrange a meeting with Skur, who is captured by Mulder and his accomplice, and Dales walks away with nothing. It's the end of the case for him, and he doesn't hear of Skur again for 38 years, until



In "Travelers," Mulder visits retired FBI agent Arthur Dales (*THE NIGHT STALKER*'s Darren McGavin), who worked on X-files in the past.

Mulder knocks on his door.

"Travelers," like "Unusual Suspects," is filler, but unlike "Unusual Suspects," it's not particularly entertaining. The episode's visuals are outstanding, making this, at least, a joy to watch. But, the story is paper-thin. Arthur Dales is not an intriguing character, although he has some resonance as a possible reflection of a future Mulder. Frederic Lane is fine as the younger Dales, but that's not saying much, since the part is the typical one of a young, naive agent initiated into the dark, clandestine byways of his job. And if you're going to bring in Darren McGavin, don't use him in a minor role where he mostly narrates! Bill Mulder is equally dull. This episode, with its historical characters (Cohn and Hoover) and its crustacean-like alien parasites, comes off like a reject from *DARK SKIES*, with a bit of Heinlein thrown in for good measure. The revisionist history does a disservice to the real-life people who stood up for their rights in the early 1950s and suffered blacklisting, imprisonment, and stress-induced illness and death. It's okay: they weren't Communists—they had aliens inside them! The use of historical characters was a cheap device on *DARK SKIES*, and considering how everyone considered *DARK SKIES* an *X-FILES* rip-off, the irony is pathetic. Hoover and Cohn come off as mere mouthpieces justifying the conspiracy's "ends justify the means" mentality. The scenes when the alien emerges from Skur's mouth are technically expert, but repulsive and nonsensical, since an autopsy on one of the afflicted men reveals the creature is stitched to the internal organs—but then we see Skur's parasite exiting freely through his mouth and entering Michel's. How come it doesn't eat Skur's organs as it eats those of the other

with helping organize the chaos, especially the last minute second-unit demands which crop up while having to prepare three shows at once. Tony Wolgemuth does many of the illustrations used as the basis for the shop's designs. Leeann Podavin and Geoff Redknapp, who have come up through the ranks, have been co-keying episodes with Lindala, alternating with one another in preparing the episodes for filming.

"I find we're lucky," said Lindala. "There aren't a lot of artists available up here that are knowledgeable in makeup effects, but I think because of the lack of resource in comparison to L.A., the people who are here are really well rounded. They have to oversee all the processes on their own and have to become proficient at all the processes on their own as opposed to the kind of specialization of all the shops down there."

Lindala's work was nominated for an Emmy for the fourth season episode called "Leonard Betts." "That was a really fun episode, directed by Kim Manners—zany, zany stuff," said Lindala. The episode featured a man who was composed of cancer, so that his physiomy was different, and his makeup was based on cancer cells. The character needed to ingest cancer from other people to continue on and in order to exercise his incredible ability to regenerate himself like a salamander does in nature. In the beginning of the show, his head gets cut off and then he regenerates himself. Towards the end of the show, he births himself out of his own mouth.

"Of course, being television, we don't get into the full, complete sequence," noted Lindala, "but one really fun element at the beginning of it, he flips back his head and screams this wide mouth scream; his throat bulges, and this new head—this protoversion of himself, this white gelatinous sort of makeup, a veiny version of himself—comes squeezing out of his mouth and screams like a newborn child. That was probably the biggest advancement that we had made."

Additionally, Lindala enjoyed inserting radio controlled mechanisms into the Betts piece. "We did four-way eye movement and some expression in his brow. That was [a scene] where we got to hold on [the makeup] for a minute, and the movement worked really well. There was a wider shot—so it's just sort of subtly inferred—you see his eyes roll and come back down looking more forward as his second head comes out of his mouth, and he is able to watch it himself."

Lindala enjoys developing new things and working more and more with animatronics and servo-motors. He has been behind a number of the creature builds for the show, including the bug creature named Pinkus working for the Final Side Telemarketing Company in "Foiles Adieu," the spi-

**“The show has done wonders for me. It's given me a chance to assemble a team of talented artists. We had a blast.”**

**—Makeup Artist Toby Lindala—**



Lindala's work on THE X-FILES television series led to the feature *DISTURBING BEHAVIOR* (above, with Lindala seen at left) for veteran X-FILES director David Nutter.

der in "Travellers" ("You don't end up seeing a whole lot of it," he wilyly observes), the cable-controlled tentacles for "Schizo Jennie" that wraps around Mulder's legs, as well as a radio-controlled version of the character of Esther for "Kill Switch."

Lindala's crew uses foam latex whenever they have to have that security in application and maintenance or in active movement, but whenever they can get away with it, they use gelatin and have been experimenting with silicon.

Because the crew is constantly under the gun in terms of television schedule, they have sometimes worked with materials that they were still developing their use of, and that were actually just being developed technically by their manufacturers. One example Lindala remembers was "this wonderful silicon by Circle-K called XP-245. [Circle K] were great, in giving terms of technical advice and all, but we got this silicon sent out and did some tests with it and

were plasticizing it to varying degrees to get the amount of stretch we needed from it. It's wonderful stuff. If it's correctly tinted, it reads like flesh on camera. We tested it real close to his skin tone, only had to freckle it on the surface, so it read the light beautifully. But the first few runs, it was difficult to get the silicon to do what we needed it to do. We were trying out different things, varying degrees of plasticizers, vary degrees of catalysts. We were calling down for technical advice.

"We had been working with some of their CK series, which were their regular silicones, we realized that the XP on the name meant that it was part of their experimental series which were just being developed, so they sent us out new catalysts going, 'Well, if that's not working, try this one. Maybe throw in a little bit.... Try this catalyst with this plasticizer, try these different ratios,' and we told them we had to have a good skin out in two days for camera. It was exciting to develop it, and it worked out wonderfully, but oh, the stress."

Although Fox's standards and practices division does not appear to be as uptight as those of the other networks, the show receives cautionary notices about what is and is not acceptable to air, which are regularly delivered to the production office. Fortunately, Lindala finds that this has not created much difficulty for his crew. "We get to look at the notes sent over, but generally we do it all anyway," Lindala related. "Chris will work it out with [the network censors] in cuts. "There have been some episodes where he had to totally revamp concepts because they thought them a little too much, but I think the popularity that the show has achieved speaks for itself, and there is a reason for the 9 o'clock time slot. A lot of times we'll shoot it, and we won't pull back on it, and if we have to we'll cut it into a quick little sequence, but at least we don't water down the reality of it, which I find really satisfying."

Lindala and his crew did not work on the X-FILES movie, which was filming while they were still shooting the final episodes of the fourth season. Now that the series is moving to Los Angeles, Lindala will be concentrating on MILLENIUM as well as embarking on other projects: Lindala's shop has done some episodes of *POLTERGEIST*, and they just completed his first feature, *DISTURBING BEHAVIOR*, for director David Nutter, who had recruited Lindala during the first season of X-FILES. Looking back on his accomplishments for X-FILES, Lindala said, "The show has done wonders for me. It's given me a chance to assemble a team of talented makeup effects artists up here. It's been like a rollercoaster ride. It's wonderful being there, and Chris was wonderful to work with. We just had a blast." □

# X-FILES

## MISSING MAKEUP EFFECTS

*Too little is not enough for effective big screen terror.*

**O**n the small screen THE X-FILES is known for its shadowy, suggestive horror, stirring up fear without showing too much. But when the franchise made the jump to movie theatres, there were some who felt it showed too little. This is puzzling, since the \$65-million budget should have afforded enough horrific effects imagery to fill the big screen. In fact, there was far more shot than was actually shown, and much of it was done by the KNB Effects Group.

Howard Berger (the "B" in KNB) recalled that, when the filmmakers first approached them, "What they were asking for is stuff we had done a million times before, and I didn't think it was going to be very difficult. That was my first feeling," he added with a laugh. "It escalated from there. KNB was hired originally to do all these background bodies in these ice ponds in the film. Then we started to do more important things, like this sequence where Scully and Mulder come across this dead fireman corpse. ADI [Amalgamated Dynamics, another effects company] originally did it, but there was some kind of mix-up, and we ended up redoing it. It's this weird kind of translucent jelly body, which kept going through an evolution during the course of shooting the movie. Things kept changing, with input from [director] Rob Bowman and Dan Sackheim, who's one of the producers, and from Chris Carter."

Berger says having to keep these three key people pleased all the time was a challenge, but one he appreciated: "I ended up having a really good time with it, because it made me stay on my toes and be super-creative, and keep trying to come up with new things that we hadn't seen before. The fireman was the first hero piece we did for the film. We ended up doing about 40 background bodies, about 20 that were still in humanoid form, and 20 that were in a stage of decomposition. We went back and forth, matching stuff ADI did. It was kind of fun working with them, and what's nice is their shop is right up the street from ours."

The construction of the fireman corpse required a material that proved very tricky to work with. Berger recalled: "We found a translucent and transparent silicone that was super touchy. It's inhibited by a million and one



Mulder searches for something scary in the X FILES film. He should have looked on the cutting room floor, where most of the effects ended up.

things, which means it won't set up, and you pop your mold and you just have a bunch of goo. It started with the kind of clay we used for sculpting—it couldn't have any sulfur in it. And the molds we had to make had to be compatible with the silicone, and we had to keep everything clean. In the film, there was an autopsy done on this body, and it was all gooey and squishy. It was fun to make it, but it was really a nightmare, and we kept reshooting it."

He added, "I went in to the show thinking, *Okay, we'll just do some bodies—big deal.* But Dan Sackheim really wanted to stretch the bounds, and I appreciate that. We tried to do everything in our power that we could to give him everything he wanted. He was real specific about things. I thoroughly enjoyed my working relationship with him, and with Chris Carter and Rob Bowman. It was very collaborative. I had never worked with the three of them before. We had done some things here and there on the series, things that Toby [Lindala], the Vancouver makeup artist, was unable to get to because of his schedule or whatever."

Those stretched boundaries, however, snapped back, in the editing room. "I thought we did some really great stuff," said Berger. "We did this one piece that was really groundbreaking that is in the trailer. Mulder comes across this big block of ice in the ship, and wipes away frost to reveal this Neanderthal frozen in the block. Some stuff had been done before, but ultimately nobody was happy with it, so we realized we needed to make it really

look like it's submerged in ice and works on the same physical level as that. So we first did a sculpture of this kind of desiccated Neanderthal, and took a mold of that, pulled the silicone mold off with the sculpture still intact, and we carved it down into a skeleton of that character, a little alien in the belly. Then we took a mold of that, and cleaned out all the molds. Then we ran in clear urethane, first into the skeletal version, popped that, painted it up, then put that into the first mold of the desiccated Neanderthal, which was all locked in with interlocking keys. Then we ran that with water-clear urethane, and popped that, and we had a perfect translucent, transparent Neanderthal that you could see all these different layers."

The next part of the construction became even more time-consuming.

Berger reported: "We submerged it into, I think it was, hundreds of gallons of the clear urethane. We could only pour four inches every four hours, because of the heating process. We found, doing tests, that if we poured a big lump sum all at once, it would heat so much it would just crack inside. So we had guys working all night long. Actually, our key moldmaker, Brian Ray, was the guy behind all that; he figured out how to do it, and masterminded it, and was the guy here at night. But it turned out to be a beautiful piece. On the last day of shooting, I sat there and told Dan Sackheim, Rob Bowman and the editors, 'If this is not in the movie, I'm going to kill all of you!' They kept going, 'That's the world's biggest paperweight.' And I'm like, 'And expensive, too.' It cost a hell of a lot of money, and it took us like nine weeks to build."

Ultimately, the scene was not used in the film itself. Berger, who was less than satisfied with the way his work appeared—or rather did not appear—in either the film or the various publicity tie-ins, was fairly vocal with his displeasure and wanted a chance to show viewers what they had missed. Word came down from Carter's 10-13 productions, however, that no images of KNB's work were to be released to the press. "The only thing I can think of," said Berger, searching for an explanation, "is that some of the stuff that wasn't used in the film will be used in the series. They came under a lot of flack, because nothing's in the movie."

Douglas Eby and Jay Stevenson

victims? Michel as the partner—i.e., the X-FILES Red Shirt—is killed off, for no other reason than to create a shocking moment.

Continuity is unforgivably sloppy. Mulder did not learn about his father's involvement in the conspiracy until "Anasazi," yet now we're told he learned about it several years earlier. He didn't learn about Nazi scientist involvement until "Paper Clip," but now that's invalid, too. In "Shapes," Mulder informs Scully that Hoover opened the X-Files in 1946, but in "Travelers" a records clerk tells Dales she put the files in "X" because she ran out of room in the "U" drawer. Mulder wears a wedding ring (and he's smoking!) although he clearly lives in the same bachelor apartment he has always occupied. Duchovny stated he wore the ring intentionally to create speculation, but this back-end development makes you want to rip your hair out in frustration. You can see Duchovny looking for something to do, since nothing is there for him in the script—so he wears the ring, smokes and keeps smoothing back his hair to give an impression of youthful nervousness. The hair-smoothing gesture is far from subtle—they don't want us to miss that ring.

The ending is morally unfeasible. Mulder wonders how Skur escaped, and Dales speculates that someone might have let him go in order to someday expose the crimes committed against Skur and others. One last flashback shows Bill Mulder releasing Skur. But what kind of charity is this? Skur is a victim, but he's also a killer who will continue to kill, thanks to what was done to him. Bill Mulder is willing to let more murder be done in the vague hope this will expose the conspiracy, but he evades all responsibility by refusing to be involved in that exposure himself. The portrait painted of this man in earlier episodes has never been pretty (he permitted his daughter to be abducted; he treated his son with contempt) but this action is so vile one begins to think he deserved what happened to him in "Anasazi." It is beyond comprehension that Dales and Mulder—especially Mulder—also seem to think this action is justified. The real x-file this season is why the writers are so insistent on draining from Mulder everything that made him not only sympathetic, but admirable.

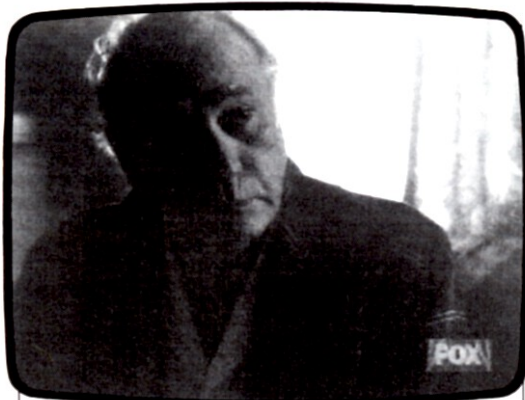
**"Somewhere Marcia Clark weeps, but you still haven't got a weapon."**  
—Marty

### MIND'S EYE ★★1/2

4/19/98. Editor: Casey O. Rohrs. Written by Tim Minear. Directed by Kim Manners.

The Wilmington, Delaware police find a young woman named Marty Glenn (Lili Taylor) at a motel murder scene and book her for the crime. Detective Pennock (Blu Mankula) asks Mulder and Scully for help on the case, because the circumstances are so peculiar. Marty is blind, yet allegedly she took a 60-mile cab ride to the scene and carved a precise C-shaped cut in the victim. Mulder is dubious that

**In "Mind's Eye," Mulder visits Marty in jail; he believes the blind woman's presence at a crime scene was due to a psychic link with a killer.**



**Darren McGavin's role in "Travelers" turns out to be a minor one, which mostly consists of his narrating past events seen in flashback.**

Marty is guilty, but Det. Pennock says he feels Marty—who has a long rap sheet for minor crimes—has a "sixth sense" that lets her see in the dark, like a bat.

Mulder and Scully interrogate Marty. She is hostile, uncooperative and sarcastic, and refuses to confess. Mulder feels drawn to her and is convinced that she is innocent. Scully is not so sure. A lie detector test confirms Mulder's suspicions that Marty is hiding something, although an eye exam confirms she cannot see physically. Mulder notices her pupils suddenly contract and suspects Marty can "see," but in her mind's eye, not with her real eyes. Meanwhile, a recently paroled convict named Gotts (Richard Fitzpatrick) is arranging a drug deal, but takes some time out to harass a woman at a bar. Marty "sees" the action through the Gotts' eyes and calls him at the bar to warn him off. After she is released from jail without being charged, she "sees" the man murder the woman in an alley. She rushes to the scene and when apprehended by police, claims to have committed both murders. Mulder asks Marty who she is protecting, but she won't say. He tells her he believes it's the man who murdered her mother when she was pregnant with Marty, an attack that caused Marty's blindness. Gotts tracks down Marty and she "sees" herself as he sees her and she knows she is in danger from this man. Tests on the blood from a glove Scully found at the first murder scene confirm Gotts is Marty's father. She is to be moved to a safe location and goes home to pack with Det. Pennock, but suddenly cold-cocks Pennock and grabs his gun. She knows her father is coming to kill her. When he enters the apartment, she shoots him point-blank. This time she is guilty of a homicide.

"Mind's Eye" is strikingly reminiscent of third season's "Oubliette," but since the new episode doesn't have the specific connection "Oubliette" drew between Lucy and Mulder's sister Samantha, it doesn't touch the heart as deeply. Mulder's sympathy for Marty blossoms too quickly and seems forced, although his affinity for troubled young women is not without precedent and thus ultimately believable. Scully is pretty much on auto-pilot; although she uncovers some valuable evidence, another character could have done the same without changing the story. In fact, Mulder and Scully don't have much effect on the story whatsoever, which really is about Marty and the torment she undergoes when her father, after many years, is freed from jail and she is forced to see, through his eyes, his unrestrained cruelty and violence. She makes the choice to go to prison herself rather than return there through the eyes of her father. At least it will be her experience, not her father's. The price to take control of her own life, though, is pre-meditated murder, so Marty is not without stain herself. Unfortunately, the story makes the choice too obvious for Marty (and too easy for the audience) by presenting Gotts as such an unregenerate slime that all you can think is that he deserves what he gets. It's vigilante justice.

The admirable actress Lili Taylor graces this episode with her heartfelt portrayal, modulating from super-tough to super-vulnerable in a blink. It is she who makes "Mind's Eye" truly memorable. The work of director Manners and cinematographer Ransom is also highly effective, particularly in the distorted shots where Marty sees through her father's eyes. The shot where from her father's POV she "sees" herself shoot him is masterful in conception and execution.

**"As much as I have my faith, Father, I am a scientist, trained to weigh evidence. Science only teaches us how, not why."**  
—Scully

### ALL SOULS ★

4/26/98. Editor: Heather MacDougall. Teleplay by Frank Spotnitz & John Shiban. Story by Billy Brown & Dan Angel. Directed by Allen Coulter.

"All Souls" unfolds in flashback, as Scully confesses to a priest her involvement in a case with religious implications. A week ago, Father McCue (Arnie Walkder) asked Scully to help out a family that had recently lost their adopted daughter, Dara, under puzzling circumstances that can't be explained by the police. Father McCue feels that because Scully had suffered a similar loss, she would be the right person to look into the death. Dara (Emily Perkins), a wheelchair-bound adolescent, had just been baptized. That night her father saw her walking down the street during a violent storm and when he went after her, found her dead in a kneeling position of prayer, her eyes burned out. Scully asks Mulder to find Dara's adoption records. They reveal Dara was a quadruplet. A priest named Father Gregory (Jody Racicot) arrives at a local psychiatric institution to take home the girl



**Marty Glenn (Lili Taylor) is discovered by police as she is cleaning up a crime scene. But she's blind, so how could she have committed a murder?**

he has arranged to adopt, a disturbed youngster named Paula Koklos. He is prevented from taking Paula by her new social worker, Aaron Starkey (Glenn Morshower), who says all the paper work isn't finished. That night, Paula is killed the same way Dara was. Scully arrives the next morning and notices an inverted cross in Paula's room. She autopsies Paula and notices bony protrusions on the clavicle that she thinks look like the stubs of angel wings. During the autopsy, she is dumfounded by a vision of Emily on the autopsy table, whispering, "Mommy, please..." Scully and Mulder talk to Father Gregory at his church, the Church of St. Peter the Sinner. Scully is shaken by Father Gregory's assertion that there is a struggle going on between good and evil that puts "the messengers" in danger; she feels he's talking directly to her. Mulder thinks Gregory is a dangerous wacko; Scully has her doubts. They track down the third sister, but she, too, has been killed. They arrest Father Gregory, who tells them he is trying to save the girls from the Devil, but Scully believes it's not the Devil who wants the girls. Left alone in the interrogation room,



Gregory is visited by Starkey, who begins to radiate a light so intense it burns Gregory to death. When Scully leaves the police station later that night, she experiences a remarkable vision: a man (Tracy Eloffson) with four faces standing in a blaze of light. Shaken, she goes to Father McCue, who tells her the story of the Seraphim and their disfigured half-divine children, the Nephilim, who weren't meant to be and whose souls must be called home before the devil gets them. But what Scully saw was a figment of her imagination, he says. Scully, with Mulder's help, finds the fourth girl but when the blazing man appears, the girl pulls away from Scully, who suddenly sees Emily once more pleading to be let go. Scully lets go of Emily's hand—and the last girl, like her sisters, dies, her eyes burned out. At least the Devil has been thwarted. Scully feels entirely responsible for the last girl's death and tearfully ponders its meaning.

With its trip into blatant religiosity, "All Souls" comes off like a bad episode of MILLENNIUM. The great director Ernst Lubitsch once told another great director, Billy Wilder, not to spell things out for the audience, as if they were idiots, just put two and two together and let the audience add it up. "All Souls" violates this sage piece of advice, starting with the teaser, when Dara confronts the angel on the street. As her soul is taken, the camera pans to the right and stops to linger on a telephone pole that forms a cross. Uh oh, this must be a sequel to "A Christmas Carol" and "Emily."

Scully's woe is interminable; she is in tears practically throughout. And it's all for a child for whom it is impossible to feel anything, thanks to



**In a MILLENNIUM-type episode, Scully has a vision of a blazing Seraphim who has come to Earth to reclaim half-divine offspring of angels.**

tells her he's following someone, but then we see him enter a porn movie theater. While Mulder's consumption of pornography has served in the past to symbolize his isolation and lack of significant relationships, here it's just a tasteless joke, making him look like an insensitive creep while Scully chastely suffers on and on. This is gender stereotyping to an extreme degree in a show that used to transcend the stereotypes. And while Mulder has never been a believer in organized, Western religion, the scorn with which he treats an emotionally fragile Scully is disgraceful, especially when he turns around the next minute and advises her to step away from the case because she's too involved (say, isn't that why Father McCue wanted her on this case?). This is advice Mulder would never take from anyone, including Scully.

Father McCue is the most annoying priest on television.

The cinematography and the special effects are outstanding, particularly in the use of blinding light to obscure the angel and the revelation of the angel's four heads.

**"What happened to your hand?"** —Skinner  
**"Terrorist lie detector."** —Mulder

**THE PINE BLUFF VARIANT** ★★1/2

5/3/98. Editor: Lynne Willingham. Written by John Shiban. Directed by Rob Bowman.

Skinner and Scully observe from a van Mulder and other agents staking out a park where a known domestic terrorist named Jacob Haley (Daniel von Bargen) has arranged to meet a contact. The two suspects connect, an envelope is passed, Haley leaves (with Mulder in pursuit) and the second man collapses, his flesh eaten away. Scully is so alarmed for Mulder's safety that she runs after him, and to her shock, sees him letting Haley drive off in a car. The next day she confronts Mulder about his actions, but he shrugs off her inquiries. They both attend a meeting of a joint FBI/CIA group that is tracking Haley's movements. Haley is second-in-command of an extremist right-wing group led by one Arthur Bremer (Michael McRae). Tests show the man in the park was killed by a biotoxin that has not yet been identified. Meanwhile, Mulder continues to act suspiciously: Scully sees him drive off with Haley to a meeting where he tells him he identifies with his group's goals, but Haley distrusts him. Scully follows Mulder but she is forced off the road and escorted into the presence of Skinner and U.S. Attorney Leamus (Sam Anderson). She's told that Mulder is working undercover, that he was approached by Bremer's group after he spoke at a UFO conference and denounced government cover-ups. Mulder is threatened by Haley and physically coerced by Haley's companion, the Gimp (Armin Moatter), who breaks his pinky. In Ohio, the patrons and staff of a movie theater are found dead, their flesh

eaten just like the man in the park. Scully arrives to investigate.

Back in Washington, she tells Mulder she knows he's undercover; outside Mulder's apartment someone is listening to their conversation with a laser beam listening device. Mulder tells Skinner the terrorist group is planning to hit a bank; he is given fake microfiche files with Federal Reserve schedules to pass to Haley. Scully learns that the deadly pathogen is a form of streptococcus which has been coated with a synthetic protective covering which gives them an adhesive quality; dermal contact activates the contagion. But Scully finds the germ is similar to but much more advanced than one developed at the Army's Pine Bluff facility in the 1960s, leading her to believe that that program continued even after the government officially cancelled it. Where this version came from, no one knows. Bremer and Haley force Mulder to wear a mask and join the terrorist group in the bank robbery. Afterwards, when Scully recognizes Mulder on the bank's videotape, thanks to his taped finger, the FBI rushes to the bank. Scully realizes that the real purpose of the robbery was to expose people once more to the germ—another test. Back at terrorist headquarters, Bremer forces Haley and Mulder to their knees. He plays the tape of Mulder and Scully talking—Haley realizes he's been duped. Bremer lets Haley go and orders the Gimp to shoot Mulder, but then he suddenly shoots the Gimp and orders Mulder to get out of there. Mulder realizes Bremer is a government operative and rushes back to the bank, where he confronts Skinner and Leamus. He accuses Leamus of knowing all along about the biotoxin and the tests. Leamus tells him sometimes it's his job to protect people from knowing the truth. Shortly after Haley drives off, his car goes off the road: he is the latest victim of the biotoxin.

The plot of "The Pine Bluff Variant" is one you might see on any cop or action/suspense show, and after five years of conspiracy betrayals, the ending is not much of a surprise. The episode's main flaw is the red herring of Scully's suspicions at the beginning. It's inconceivable that she, as Mulder's partner, would not be told that he is on an undercover assignment—what she doesn't know is precisely what could get him in trouble, as it almost does. Nor would Mulder ever throw in with terrorists, so this isn't remotely suspenseful for the audience. The writers must have realized how silly this was, since Scully learns Mulder's true mission by the end of act one. However, thanks to Rob Bowman's direction, Willingham's crisp editing, Mark Snow's music (Snow's metallic tick-tock expertly jacks up the tension) and a number of exciting set-pieces for Mulder, it's an absorbing hour of entertainment. The scene where Haley interrogates Mulder while the Gimp bends back Mulder's pinky until he finally breaks it is especially gripping. It's not often we see our heroes hurt in such a startling and immediate way. The bank robbery scene and the execution scenes are also well staged. Duchovny does an excellent job

**In "The Pine Bluff Variant," a terrorist group dons monster masks during a bank heist that turns out to have more than robbery as its motive.**



**Mulder's undercover identity is found out when tries to investigate a group of anti-government terrorists in "The Pine Bluff Variant."**

the manipulative dreariness of those two earlier episodes. "All Souls" might have worked if the writers had handled the story more delicately; for instance, if they had made this a regular case, instead of having Father McCue, with all the tact and grace of the bull in the china shop, request Scully's assistance; and if Scully had not seen visions of Emily. If Scully had released the fourth girl's hand without seeing Emily, the more metaphorical treatment might have created a true sense of pathos. But it's probably a lost cause, since this is a continuation of a storyline that failed the first time around to evoke any true emotion. This notion that Scully has been "chosen" to save children was interesting back in "Revelations," but it's getting ridiculous, especially since it now means that she has to let them go to their deaths to "save" them. This is such a dreadful burden of guilt to put on Scully and a terrible way to create "drama" and "conflict" for her. Gillian Anderson is fine, delivering all the tears and quivering lip you could ask for, but what a waste of an excellent actress who has traveled down this tear-stained route far too many times. Besides, when is Scully going to admit she is not just chosen, but downright psychic?

Mulder is treated disrespectfully. When we first see him, he's in a phone booth talking to Scully. He

# X-FILES

## DARK MUSIC

*From ambient sound design to Mahleresque melody.*

By Randall D. Larson

Although he began scoring television in 1976, it's only recently that Mark Snow has received acclaim as the composer for THE X-FILES and its offspring, MILLENIUM. Snow's ambient music for both series has become as much a part of them as the characters of Mulder, Scully, and Frank Black.

"After the first year, I've had complete leeway. I can do whatever the hell I want!" Snow said of his style for THE X-FILES. "Musically, the show has evolved from being more ambient, sound-design, supportive music to really getting into some melodic music in a dark, Mahleresque style. What is great is I can go back and forth. There's always a combination of the two. I just did a show that has a lot of flash-back-dream sequences, where it's just all very atonal, avant-garde, sound-design and accents and wonderfully weird combinations of sound and music. And then it goes back into Mahler or Bruckner or late Beethoven!"

Snow composes original music for each episode—there is no re-use of cues, no themes for Scully or Mulder or other characters. Snow prefers to compose for each episode's given situation, maintaining a consistently ambient undercurrent of eeriness and discomfort without sharing motifs for characters or events. "I create a theme for the situation," Snow said. "Of all of these shows, there's only been one where I've used the Main Title theme, and that was just for a brief moment at the end of 'Jose Chung's From Outer Space,' which was sort of a spoof of the series."

Snow gets anywhere from three to five days to score each episode. "The hardest part of the process is the beginning, figuring out the palette of sounds and instruments, and doing that first big cue," he said. "Everything after that is somewhat related. I usually write Act 4 first. After that's done, the whole score starts falling into place."

As the series evolved over its five seasons, Snow's music has similarly grown from subtle synths to complex orchestrations and highly-textured tonalities. "The show started off with more of a minimal



Composer Mark Snow's music as become as much a part of the series as Mulder and Scully.

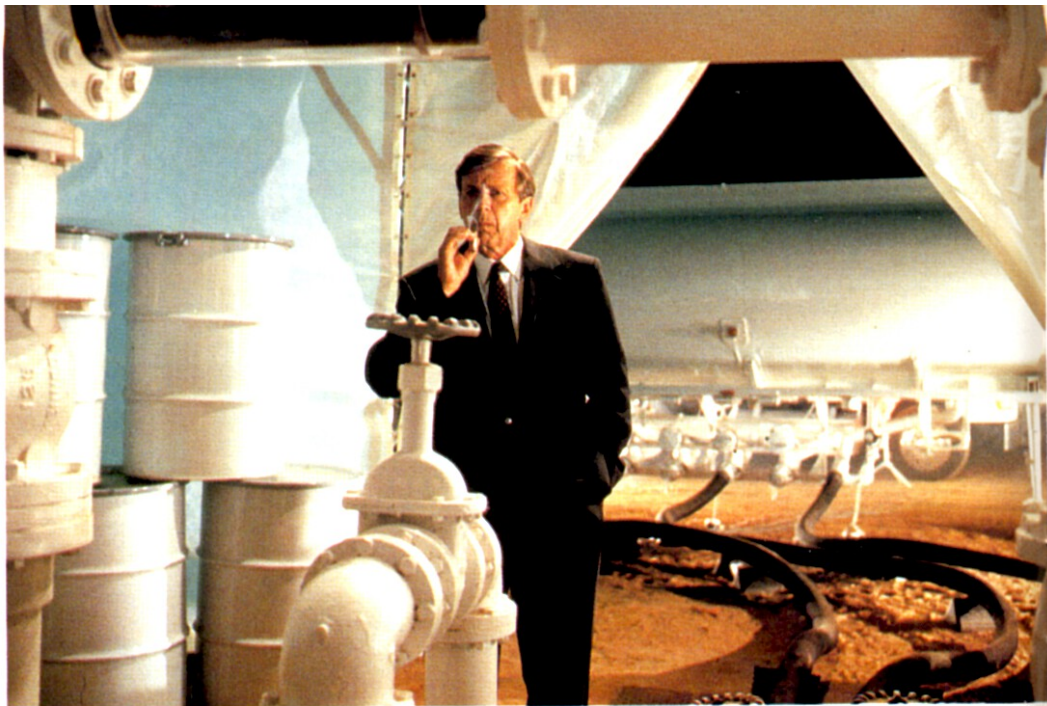
sound design, synthesizer sustained, don't-make-trouble type of score: *Don't be noticed!*" Snow said. "And now I'm scoring under dialogue; there's sneaking-around-the-house music where I can really compose music rather than just a wash of sustained notes."

Snow adopts an amalgamation of modern and traditional scoring styles on THE X-FILES. "It seems that people respond to that music as if it's this really new approach, but it's really just the stuff that I've come to love over the years," he said. "Music by Varese, John Cage, all the real atonal stuff that maybe I like more than some other composers. I think that some of those sounds and techniques work great in suspense. I think that was more normal many years ago, and then with the advent of the electronic sounds it was just all these great samples and electronic sound-design things. I use both techniques on THE X-FILES, the 12-tone, atonal, aleatoric language, mixed in with a more traditional scoring approach. It's really wonderful to have all of these things in the arsenal."

Working with Chris Carter has been beneficial to Snow's musical development over

the course of the series. "During the first three years, he would come to the recording sessions every time he was in town," said Snow. "He was very much involved in every aspect of production. I mean, he could get a script from one of the writers, and it could be just brilliant, and he'd still rewrite the whole thing! He rewrites every script to some degree, some from top to bottom, others just certain portions, but he puts his mark on everything. He really wants to feel the sense of control that it's his show, his voice, his sound, his vision. If he could, he'd probably rewrite every score! In the beginning of year four, he started not coming to the scoring sessions or the playback of the music, and now he never comes. I may get a call from him every month or two, and it's 'Hey man, that score there was great! Ok man, I gotta go now, goodbye!'"

Even during the early seasons, however, Carter gave Snow a free hand in scoring and orchestrating the series as he saw fit. "He's loved the sound of my electronic stuff so much that every time I enter a new element, whether it's a new sound-design thing or a new English horn, bassoon, woodwind, French horn, brass, this or that—he just lets



Snow's approach to the series emphasized ambience and avoided specific motifs. But for the film he introduced themes for the sinister characters in the fifth season closer and carried them over to the film.

me do it."

Response from the show's millennia of fans shows they consider the music as important a component of THE X-FILES as do Snow and Carter. "The fan reactions to the music—every time there's an emotional piece, a melodic cue, that's what people react to the most," said Snow. "There have been shows last season that have had really moving scenes, and that's the music that got the most feedback."

Snow's music for Carter's spin-off series, MILLENNIUM, creates an even darker undertone. "When they first came to me about that, they said, 'We want this music to depict good and bad, Heaven and Hell, hope and horror.' And I asked, 'Which is it more of? Is it more dark than light, more horror than hope, or what?' They said 'Yeah.' So I thought of this single voice which turned out to be the solo violin, with this dark percussion accompaniment. The pilot is really just that, the sort of folksy, Celtic violin solos with the sleepy, dark, synthesizer-rumbling *moosh* stuff. I've gotten into more specific dark music with this Celtic contrast, whether it's solo violin or solo harp or solo woodwind, or woodwinds with harp or piano accompaniment. That seems to have worked well lately. They've really loved the idea of this simple honesty of that sound, and of course when there's horror you just have to do it."

Naturally, Snow composed the music to the X-FILES feature film. While no stranger to feature film scoring (he composed 1995's BORN TO BE WILD and recently scored David Netter's DISTURBING BEHAVIOR), Snow found the opportunity to translate his X-FILES music to the big screen a refreshing challenge. "Ninety percent of the score is big orchestra combined with electronics," said Snow. "It's a traditional sound with the orchestra, to an extent, but in a sharp contrast to the elec-

tronic stuff."

The scope of the movie is the biggest contrast with the TV show, according to Snow. "There are things in the movie that the TV show can and will never do," Snow said. "There are massive CGI effects quite appropriate for the big screen that they don't have the time or money to do for the series. But it's still a very dense, deep story, quite complicated."

The feature score afforded Snow the opportunity to delve into recurring themes and motifs much more than he was able to do in the series. Even his main X-FILES theme found multiple guises in the feature score. "The X-FILES theme was harmonized and orchestrated in different settings that never appeared on the TV show," said Snow. "The TV version is sort of a one-note pad with simple accompaniment. Now I've put different kinds of harmonization to it. It doesn't happen every place, but it happens enough that anyone who knows the theme would recognize it." Snow also created new themes for the film's more sinister characters, such as the Cigarette-Smoking Man and the Elders. "The last episode of the TV season had a lot of these themes in it," Snow said, to "introduce some of the movie music."

The tonality of Snow's music—which will be available on a score-only CD shortly after the release of the song "soundtrack" CD—remains appropriately dark. "The great thing about the TV series is that when we have these stand-alone episodes, some of which verge on black comedy, I can do a lot of cute things with the music. The big shows, the mythical-conspiracy-cover-up shows are fairly drab, so there's not much room for anything but the real dark approach." The feature film carries on that approach. "I wanted to continue the effect and the honesty of the music from the series, and have it modulate to the big screen," said

Snow, who wrote some 75 minutes of music for the film, although he would have preferred less. "I'm actually hoping to convince these people to take some of it out!" he said, before the release. "In a feature, you don't need the constant reminder that something's going on, with accents and music all over the place. For better or for worse, though, the legacy of the music of THE X-FILES has always been: play lots of music!"

Snow pre-recorded all the electronic tracks, which were then transferred to a digital 48-track mixing machine. The symphonic music was recorded separately with an 85-piece orchestra. The synths and symphs were then mixed together to create the film's final musical sound which was, in turn, merged with the dialogue and sound effects tracks to create the film's final soundtrack. The orchestral music features lots of percussion and bass instruments, capturing the dark approach needed of the score. "The percussionists were all over the place—glass and marimbas and all kinds of crazy instruments," said Snow. "The combination of the ambient electronic stuff and the orchestra should be really spectacular."

With the feature film completed, Snow looks forward to a return to the TV series in August. "I've been very lucky because the quality of X-FILES and MILLENNIUM is so good, in general, that it's like doing a mini-feature every week," he said. "I'd like to graduate some day to where I'm not doing episode TV, and I'm doing three, four, five movies a year, where I could really expand my career from film to film. But if you look at the graph of my career, it's a very steady build and then it sometimes plateaus, but it never dips. I'm not talking necessarily quality projects, but just working. There was one time a few years ago where I had a three-month period of no work, and that's been it. That's pretty good." □



of conveying Mulder's pain and stress while attempting to maintain a facade of complicity with men who are ready to kill him at any moment. Anderson doesn't have as much fun in this episode but she is otherwise fine in a conventional part.

"Monsters? I'm your boy."

—Mulder

## FOLIE A DEUX

★★★

5/10/98. Editor: Casey O. Rohrs. Written by Vince Gilligan. Directed by Kim Manners.

Gary Lambert (Brian Markinson) is an employee of a direct-marketing vinyl siding firm called VinylRite located in Oak Brook, Illinois. Gary is terrified of his boss, Greg Pincus (John Apicella), who he believes is not a man, but a man-sized insect-like creature that buzzes and flits around the office and sucks the life out of people, turning them into zombies. But he's the only one who can see the insect-man; to everyone else he's simply Mr. Pincus. After Gary sends a taped message to a local radio station warning of the creature that stalks VinylRite and demanding the tape be played 24 hours a day, Skinner tells Mulder and Scully to make a threat assessment on the company, which is being careful ever since an employee at another branch threatened people with a gun several years ago.

Mulder is annoyed by what he considers a time-waster of an assignment and tells Scully not to bother going—he'll take care of it himself. He talks to Pincus, listens to the tape and decides whoever sent it is merely deranged. He asks Scully to look through the X-Files for a phrase heard on the tape, "hiding in the light," which is how Lambert believes Pincus disguises himself. Mulder then returns to VinylRite and walks right into a hostage situation: Gary is brandishing a high-powered rifle and has separated the "zombies" and Mr. Pincus from "the actual humans." He wants a cameraman to come in and reveal Mr. Pincus's true identity to the world: The FBI sends in the cameraman. Mulder pretends to be a job applicant, but his cover is blown when FBI Agent Rice (Roger R. Cross) uses Scully's cell phone to call him. Gary is about to kill Pincus on camera when Mulder intervenes. Gary begs him to turn around and look at Pincus and when he does, Mulder sees what Gary sees: a huge insect-like creature. Just then, the police crush through the wall and shoot Gary. The crisis is over, but Mulder is shaken by more than just being a hostage. He goes back to D.C., where he tells a worried Scully what he saw. She suggests that it was a hallucination brought on by the ordeal. Mulder returns to Illinois, and has shipped to Scully the body of a man killed by Gary during the hostage situation. She finds the corpse has deteriorated more than expected; Mulder says that's because he was already dead. At Gary's house, Mulder sees one of Pincus' "zombies" staring at him; she disappears but moments later drives away with Pincus. He traces Pincus to another VinylRite employee's home and

In "Folie a Deux," assistant Director Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) loses his patience with Mulder's claim that he is pursuing a monster disguised as a man.



After attacking a man he believes to be a monster in disguise, Mulder is confined to a psychiatric unit, where he is easy prey, in "Folie a Deux."

sees him bite her, but she accuses Mulder of being her attacker. Skinner arrives to investigate this, but when Mulder attacks Pincus, Skinner has him committed to a hospital psychiatric unit. Tied down by wrist restraints, Mulder is helpless to defend himself when the insect creature enters his room. Fortunately, Scully has just arrived to tell Mulder she found evidence of bite marks on the neck of the "zombie" in her autopsy bay. To her shock, she sees Mulder's nurse as a zombie and rushes to his room, shooting at something she sees in the dark. Back at the FBI, Scully is noncommittal in her report to Skinner, pronounces Mulder fit for duty, and then tells a waiting Mulder that she told the truth as best she knew it. Was it a "Folie a deux," a madness shared by two?

"Folie a Deux" is the scariest episode of the year. The insect creature, with its "now you see it, now you don't," herky-jerky movements and its buzzing sound, is a triumph for the special effects and post-production team. Even the casting for Pincus is just right. Apicella, with his round countenance, mild manner and high-pitched voice seems the soul of innocence, until he flashes a look of malevolence towards Mulder. Brian Markinson, is also wonderful as the nervous Gary. Kim Manners works in all sorts of tilted and skewed camera angles, often low shots, to demonstrate the mental instability of the characters while also keeping the audience off-balance. One of the best is a very low-angle shot of Mulder gazing down at Pincus' latest victim, oblivious to the bug-creature above him skittering across the ceiling and out the window. Another terrific moment is when Mulder first sees the insect: the lights sputter out in the room where Gary is holding the hostages and Mulder turns around, at Gary's insistence, to look at Pincus... and sees, in the darkness, the menacing form of the giant insect. In fact, any scene with the big bug is a real chiller; another nail-biter is when Pincus, behind Skinner's back, lets Mulder see his true insect form while he moves to attack Skinner, thus forcing Mulder to retaliate in a way that makes him look insane.

There's a nice metaphor at work in the script (and well realized in performance by the cast, aurally by the sound design and physically by the set design) of people caught in low-paying, soul-numbing jobs being little more than insect-type drones, anonymous workers in a buzzing, busy hive of a workplace. The tiny carrels could be the cells in a bee nest. No wonder Mr. Pincus likes to hide himself in such a setting. He probably feels right at home.

The script is structured in two parts, the first half dealing with Markinson's confrontation with the big bug, the second half dealing with Mulder's (and ultimately Scully's) realization. The second half is thus rather repetitive, but the insect is such a terrific monster that it carries the episode on its chitinous shoulders. This is one of the few times that Scully sees something out of the ordinary at the same time Mulder sees it, a rare moment of unity for them (especially this season). Unfortunately, there really is no question of

whether they are sharing a delusion or not, because the script pulls its punches in act three, when we see, from an objective angle, Pincus driving a car with one of his zombie victims in the passenger seat. Mulder is too far away behind the car for this to represent his POV. The loss of ambiguity dilutes the power of the episode, turning it into a big bug hunt. This narrative coddling keeps the episode from attaining true classic status; in the end, it simply isn't as horrifying as it should have been, because we know too much. Even so, the episode is so well realized that there is much to enjoy and be frightened by. That is one hell of a bug. Where is a can of "Die, Bug, Die!" when you need it?

"You know you're going places when the Assistant Director tidies up your office for you."  
—Mulder

## THE END

★★★

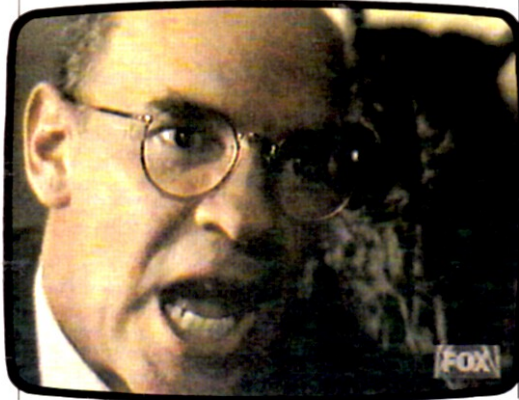
5/17/98. Editor: Heather MacDougall. Written by Chris Carter. Directed by R.W. Goodwin.

An important chess match between a Russian master and a 12-year-old boy named Gibson (Jeff Gulka) is taking place in a huge, sold-out arena in Vancouver, B.C. During the match, the boy hears some odd, electronic-like sounds. He looks around



The season finale, "The End," finds the Cigarette Smoking Man back in action, working for the conspirators who previously tried to kill him.

at the crowd but apparently sees nothing. He checkmates his opponent and pushes back in his chair just as the other man is shot with a high-powered rifle. Pandemonium erupts as the crowd rushes towards the exits. Meanwhile, in the Laurentian Mountains of Quebec, parachuters approach the remote cabin occupied by the Cigarette Smoking Man; after a brief gun battle and chase, he comes face to face with Krycek, who's been sent to bring him back. Mulder finds Skinner in his office, and after a brief discussion of Mulder's long-term plans, Skinner tells him about the assassination in Vancouver, adding that the shooter (Martin Ferraro), a former employee of the NSA, has been caught. Agent Spender (Chris Owens), who has been put in charge of the case by "outside forces," has specifically asked Mulder not to be put on the team. Mulder takes Skinner's hint and immediately intrudes on Spender's briefing. To Spender's annoyance, he points out something Spender hadn't noticed on the videotape, how the boy seems to have anticipated the shot pre-cognitively. One member of Spender's team is Agent Diana Fowley (Mimi Rogers), who knew Mulder in his early days in the Bureau and, like him, has an interest in the paranormal. At a psychiatric hospital, Gibson passes ESP tests with flying colors and also undergoes neurological tests. Mulder interrogates the shooter and suggests he will get immunity if he reveals what he knows about the boy. Meanwhile, the Well-Manicured Man (John Neville) and the First Elder (Don Williams) meet with the Cigarette Smoking Man. They want him to finish the botched assassination. Diana and Mulder discuss Gibson, then talk about the past five years



since Diana went to Europe to work on terrorism cases. Scully sees them talking and retreats to her car, calling Mulder from her cell phone. She has the results of Gibson's tests, and she also knows, thank to Frohike, that Fowley was once Mulder's "chickadee." At a meeting in Skinner's office, Scully states that Gibson has abnormal activity in an area of the brain called the "God Module." Mulder adds that Gibson may be the key to not only all human potential but all spiritual and paranormal phenomena, everything that's in the X-Files. He wants immunity for the shooter so he will reveal what he knows about the boy, and he is willing to risk the X-Files to ask the Attorney General for that immunity. Mulder informs the shooter he needs more information before immunity will be granted, and the man tells him the boy is "the missing link." Mulder realizes that this may refer to a link between humans and aliens, a theory Spender finds preposterous. Shortly afterwards, the shooter is shot through the slot in his door. Diana comes to relieve Scully from watching Gibson from the new safe location at a motel, but she is also shot. The Cigarette Smoking Man hands Gibson over to the Well-Manicured Man and Krycek; Mulder furiously assaults an outraged Spender, whom he holds responsible for the death of the shooter and the wounding of Diana. Back at Mulder's, Scully gets the news from Skinner that Diana is still alive, but there is talk of



**The Cigarette Smoking Man delivers a 12-year-old boy with psychic powers (Jeff Gulka) to the Well-Manicured Man (John Neville) in "The End."**

into the show, after the writers wrote themselves into a corner by pretending to kill him off.

And with all that Mulder and Scully have uncovered, why would the murder of a chess player and the abduction of Gibson's warrant a shut-down of the X-Files? If anything, the FBI should be beefing up Mulder's budget, considering what he and Scully have uncovered about Gibson. Or is Janet Reno part of the Conspiracy, too? Security is a joke. No guards are in sight monitoring the assassin's cell, and it's no surprise he's killed off so easily—although the Cigarette Smoking Man's threatening note on the packaging of a pack of Morleys is a clever way to signal the impending murder. At one point Mulder and Spender leave the shooter's cell without locking it. Gibson is guarded with minimal personnel who are easily overcome; Diana might as well be wearing a sign saying "shoot me" when she looks out the window of the motel room where the FBI is keeping Gibson. And where are Gibson's parents? We see them for a moment in the teaser, and Mulder speaks of them, but they otherwise absent, when they should play a prominent part of the story. Scully especially should be curious about them, after what she learned in "Christmas Carol" about Emily's parents.

Again, Mulder's characterization presents a problem. Although he's as close to his old self as he's come in a long time—smart, confident, sarcastic and able to perceive things others don't—he also suddenly believes in aliens again. One can get whiplash watching Mulder's beliefs ping-pong back and forth this season. The idea of putting Mulder through a period of self-questioning is a good one, but instead of a finely drawn portrait of a person experiencing a doubt so great it leads him down an unexpected road—i.e., skepticism—we've seen a Mulder who has been bounced from one end of the spectrum to the other without anything in between. Krycek's message and Scully's hypnotic regression in "The Red and Black" are not

**Agent Spender (Chris Owens), the Cancer Man's alleged son, returns in "The End," heading a briefing regarding the assassination of a chess master.**



sufficient explanation for Mulder's sudden return to his old theories. But since the show couldn't deal satisfactorily with a non-believing Mulder, it's probably for the best that he believes again. Don't question why, because there are no logical answers.

Mimi Rogers, who starred with David Duchovny in *THE RAPTURE*, is loved as Diana Fowley. Diana's affection for Mulder is touching, but she's not much of an agent; it's hard to believe someone as experienced as she would fall asleep on the job. And if she doesn't return next season, there seems little reason for her existence, other than to make Scully jealous and perhaps provide an oblique reference to the wedding ring Mulder sported in "Travelers." Shooting her is an easy way to get rid of her, even if she wasn't killed. The jealousy angle is played, thankfully, as subtly and low-key as possible, expressed in great deal through the editing of the reaction shots. And the foundation of the jealousy is not made explicit: professional jealousy, or is there something more? The show is teetering dangerously close to putting out in the open something that best be left bottled up. Gillian Anderson's performance in this episode is her best this year, which isn't surprising since she's finally been given something to do other than complain or cry. She is a model of restraint and the subtle mix of emotions that cross her face when she



**Mulder's former partner and old flame, Agent Diana Fowley (Mimi Rogers) discuss their present case and reminisce about old times in "The End."**

closing the X-files and reassigning her and Mulder. Mulder realizes that this entire affair was planned from the beginning. The Cigarette Smoking Man stands in Mulder's darkened office, lighting a cigarette; he removes Samantha's case file from the cabinet. On his way out he sees Spender and tells him he is his son. Cut to firemen exiting an elevator and Mulder and Scully finding the charred remains of their office. The X-files have been destroyed.

"The End" is an effective, sometimes even moving, conclusion to a scattershot season. The destruction of Mulder's X-files represents a turning point, both for the show itself, which is now moving to Los Angeles for production, but also for Mulder, who has been emotionally lost at sea this season. Anything can happen now. It's a far superior cliffhanger to last season's "Gethsemane." Gibson's abilities also represent a wild card, an intriguing new factor, although how his mental powers are the key to everything in the X-files is not very clear.

The rest of the episode is a mixed bag. Krycek has been reduced to the Well-Manicured Man's errand boy and chauffeur (a curious job for a one-armed man!). John Neville, a great actor of stage and occasionally screen, gets to say "God!" a lot, while the Cigarette Smoking Man gets all the juicy lines. Why the change of heart about killing Gibson? Also, there's no explanation as to why the Consortium suddenly needs the Cigarette Smoking Man to do its dirty work, when he's messed up so many times before, to the point where they tried to assassinate him. It's just an excuse to get him back



**A fan favorite, Nicholas Lea makes a reappearance as the ambiguous Krycek in "The End," now acting as the Well-Manicured Man's right-hand man.**

returns to her car to call Mulder is beautifully done. Yet the unspoken rivalry between Scully and Diana makes it seem as if *THE X-FILES* has been afflicted by a case of creeping ALLY MCBEAL-ization. Put two women and one man in a room, and the two women are automatically jealous of each other. This kind of characterization shows lack of imagination, and if it works at all it's because of Gillian Anderson.

Spender is still a unpleasant snot, but then, he's meant to be that way. Chris Owens almost makes you like the guy or at least feel sorry for him whenever Mulder withers him with a glance or a choice line like "You're insulting me when you should be taking notes." The "I am your father," "what!" business between Spender and the Cigarette Smoking Man is grade-A, one hundred percent pure soap; alas, we're sure to get more of it in season six.

None of this dampens the possibilities opened up by "the God Module" or the final scene, where a benumbed, stunned Mulder contemplates the ruin of his dreams while Scully holds on to him, both to comfort and to be comforted. How ironic that this destruction comes only a couple of days after Mulder had told Skinner that his "long-term plans" were the X-Files, in which he hoped to find the truth. The episode opens big and wide with a glorious, ultra-cinematic crane shot that surveys the chess match arena from up high and then closes in on the two players and it comes full circle to two other players, Mulder and Scully. The machinations of "The End" are the biggest chess game of all, and even if Mulder and Scully have been checked for now, by no means are they checkmated. □

# X-FILES

## REVIEW

### An unexceptional episode blown up to the big screen

#### THE X-FILES

20th Century Fox Presents a Ten Thirteen Production. Directed by Rob Bowman. Written by Chris Carter; story by Carter & Frank Spotnitz. Produced by Chris Carter, Daniel Sackheim; executive producer, Lata Ryan; co-producer, Frank Spotnitz. Cinematography (Deluxe color, Panavision widescreen): Ward Russell. Music: Mark Snow. Editing: Stephen Mark. Production design, Christopher Nowak; art directors; Gregory Bolton, Hugo Santiago; set decorator, Jackie Carr. Sound (Dolby digital), Geoffrey Patterson. Special makeup effects by ADI and KNB, FX. Visual effects supervisor, Matt Beck; special effects coordinator, Paul Lombardi. Costumes, Marlene Stewart. 6/98. 120 minutes. Rated PG-13.

Fox Mulder.....David Duchovny  
Dana Scully.....Gillian Anderson  
Dr. Alvin Kurtzweil.....Martin Landau  
Conrad Strughold.....Armin Mueller-Stahl  
Jana Cassidy.....Bythe Danner  
The Cigarette-Smoking Man.....William B. Davis  
The Well-Manicured Man.....John Neville  
Walter Skinner.....Mitch Pileggi  
Darius Michael.....Terry O'Quinn  
Barmid.....Glenn Headly  
Langly.....Dean Haglund  
Byers.....Bruce Harwood  
Frohike.....Tom Braidwood

by Paula Vitaris

Blown up from 27 inches or so to 200 and pushed towards an action film mode, the X-FILES feature film loses the intimacy and stifling paranoia that made it such a unique television presence. Mercifully, there are no car chases or gunfights, but two explosions, alien monsters, and tons of special effects make it look like...well, a lot of other summer movies. Director Rob Bowman gives us plenty of eerily lit shots, off-kilter camera angles, obfuscatory editing, and creepy images, but whereas such stylish visuals are rare TV fare, they are common enough in features. The film's saving grace is the presence of Duchovny and Anderson, who effortlessly leap onto the big screen, creating a connection between the viewer and the screen that very few action films possess. More than anything else, this movie points out how the relationship between the partners has become the most important element of THE X-FILES, because the plot is now virtually one big MacGuffin; it could be anything, as long as it puts our heroes in peril and drives

them towards confessions and decisions. The proof of this is how the storyline is larded up with the same kind of plotoles, coincidences and contrivances that have become a staple of the series—but they don't matter, do they, as long as we've got Mulder and Scully to keep us glued to the screen.

The movie starts off with a teaser about an alien monster and those pesky oil aliens lying in wait for thousands of years under the soil of North Texas. The scene shifts to a Dallas federal building, where Mulder and Scully are searching for a bomb, which goes off, supposedly killing an FBI bomb expert, a boy, and four firemen. A meeting between Mulder and Dr. Alvin Kurtzweil (Martin Landau) sends Mulder and Scully on a series of adventures to uncover the truth behind the bombing: something about aliens in the form of viruses who don't just want to enslave humans but to use them for gestation of...well, some kind of monster whose principal activity is tearing humans to pieces. There are also gazillions of virus-infected bees, one of which is stubborn enough to stick with Scully all



In the feature film version of THE X-FILES, Mulder somewhat fortuitously stumbles upon a brightly lit tunnel that takes him to an underground alien ship.

the way from Texas to Washington, D.C., where it stings her at the very moment Mulder is finally, after five years, about to kiss her. The movie winds up with a big action sequence as Mulder travels with one precious vial of vaccine to the Antarctic to rescue the abducted and infected Scully. Back in Washington, Mulder and Scully realize they must both continue on with their work, no matter what obstacles might be thrown in their way, and we learn that the X-Files have been reopened.

The movie is definitely a fun rollercoaster ride, and exposition is kept to a minimum. But we've been on this rollercoaster before; the storyline is patched together from any number of often superior TV episodes. And it is jury-rigged with all sorts of improbable situations. Mulder and Scully are assigned to the very team searching for a bomb the Syndicate hopes will go off without a hitch. They find it in a totally unexpected locale, thus saving hundreds of people from death and injury, but the film asks us to believe that a Justice Department pan-

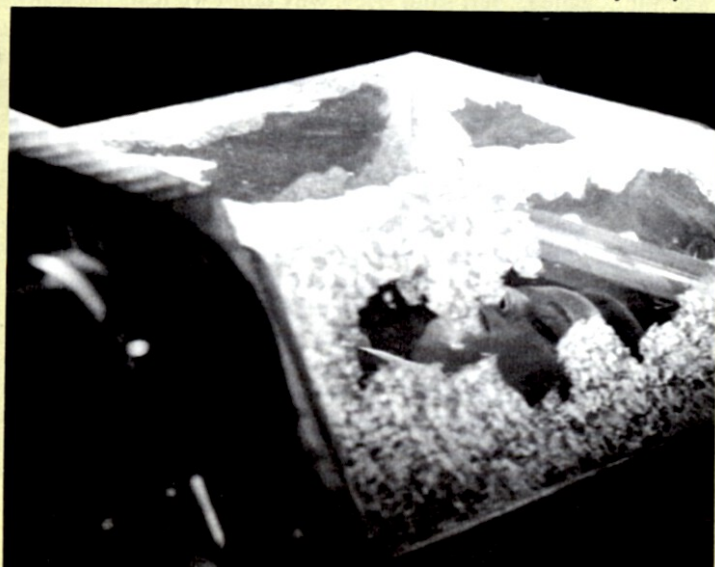
el would find them at fault, when we know that they would be proclaimed heroes. Mulder gets to the middle of the Antarctic in record time (*who* is paying for this trip?) and then just happens to fall into the exact hole in the ground that will lead him to a frozen Scully. Amazingly, the vial of vaccine is not crushed to dust during Mulder's tumble. And then there's the miracle bee, which stings at the precise moment Mulder and Scully are to kiss. It's all the more offensive (and risible) because the scene, about what Mulder and Scully owe to each other and to their work, is so movingly written and performed. A beautifully wrought scene like this cries out to be ended as honestly as it was begun.

For all their vaunted investigative skills, Mulder and Scully are passive heroes. Each real move forward comes from information provided either by Kurtzweil or the Syndicate's Well-Manicured Man (the impressive John Neville). It's the latter who finally reveals the real intentions of the aliens and gives Mulder the coordinates of Scully's location and the vaccine that will save her (and destroy the alien-built system that holds her).

The portrayal of Scully in this film is a depressing one. On the surface, she is smart and dynamic—the scene where she barks orders to clear the building is a gem. But she only gets to do the fun stuff when Mulder is around. No one approaches *her* with juicy, secret information. And her scientific knowledge goes only so far as producer and writer Chris Carter wants it to go. For instance, during the bee-cornfield scenes, she never observes, as we would expect her to, that bees normally don't pollinate corn. And then she is literally put on ice for twenty min-

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The film degenerates into a Mulder-saves-Scully episode: within the alien lair, Scully's body is found by Mulder—entombed in some kind of cryosleep.



## CHARLES CIOFFI

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to season five. "The last three shows I did, everybody was so relaxed. The first three episodes, everybody was very touchy, and they were obviously flying by the seat of their pants," he said. "First of all, they were shooting an American show in Vancouver, and things were being operated by remote control from Los Angeles. Chris was there, but I don't know what kind of a track record he had, and I think the people were a little nervous and edgy."

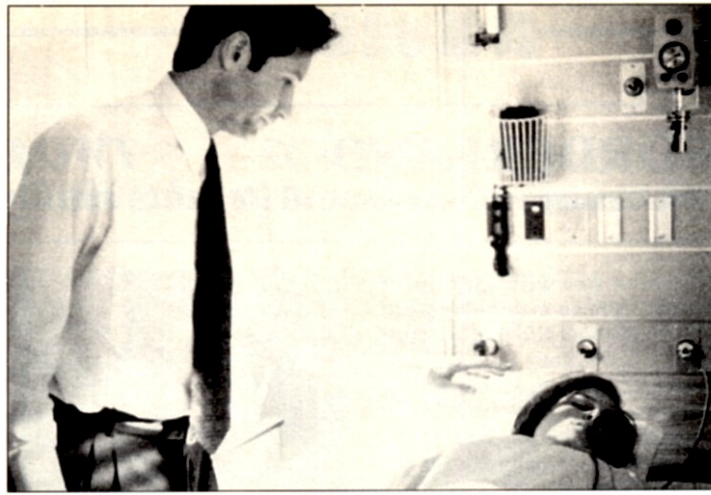
"Four years later, everybody is so sweet—they can't do enough for you, you know? The largess has really gotten to be considerable. And consequently, it was a lot easier a set to work on. Everybody knew exactly what their position was and what they wanted, and all the wheels that needed to be greased were done very discreetly, and nobody raised their voice or got out of line or had a temper tantrum." Considering that television success often brings with it inflated egos and exaggerated senses of self-importance, it's refreshing to hear that THE X-FILES has become more relaxed over the years. "They were a little uptight in the pilot," he reiterated, "and it was just in a matter of attitude and self assurance, but the people were infinitely better the second time than the first."

Is Blevins really gone for good? "You know, they never actually say that," he pointed out. "We see him get shot and fall on the ground, but we don't necessarily know that he is dead—we don't know what has happened to his body. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if Blevins came back. You know," he added, conspiratorially, "I was talking to one of the producers, Kim Manners, who also directed the episode, and I said, 'So I guess that's it for me,' and he just looked at me with a very Mona Lisa smile and said, 'You know, in The X FILES nothing is as it appears. Don't be surprised if you come back, just because it looks like you've died.'" □

## VERONICA CARTWRIGHT

continued from page 36

psychological," she says, "where they sort of leave you in that ambiguous state: you're not sure if it's the government or it's an actual alien abduction, you know? Because there's a possibility that it could possibly be true. Who knows?" So, is she a 'believer' like her character, Cassandra Spender? "Well, I mean, are we the only people? There seems to be so much energy floating around for us



Scully's illness from cancer was a recurring motif last season—a part of the THE X-FILES' descent into soap-opera style manipulation and melodrama.

to be the only people in the universe. I was sort of hoping that when that little Sojourner went up onto Mars that some Martian guy would come out and check it out, but, you know, that never happened."

But what if extraterrestrials were to visit for real? Would she welcome them as warmly as Cassandra Spender? "Oh, who knows," she responded. "I mean, if they all look like Jeff Bridges in STARMAN...absolutely!" □

## LONE GUNMAN

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decided a while ago he was not a university professor, that he works part time for a company like Xerox, and fixes photocopy machines when they're busted. I've never done that myself, but I've always been struck by the fact they come dressed in suits, when you'd expect a guy in overalls."

Byers and he are a close fit, Harwood notes: "He's basically me, except he doesn't laugh much. And he's much more paranoid. I had to use a lot of my sort of innocent reactions when we did that big episode. Usually the characters are just there to provide information in an entertaining way, so we typically just have to be involved in the excitement of passing along the information. Which makes us technology geeks, I guess. For "Unusual Suspects" I had to find a lot more stuff for him. It helped he was eight years younger, and a lot more innocent. What I hoped to show when I was doing the part was that he was a naive guy, and became the Byers we now know by the end of the episode: more cynical, doesn't laugh much, very paranoid, and very proud of his information-gathering techniques."

Personally, Harwood doesn't get involved in pursuing conspiracy theories, and says, "The world

is too complicated to be worrying about that kind of thing for me. I'm just getting by. I think Chris Carter uses that atmosphere just to play his stories in; I don't think it's necessarily a mission he has to educate us about conspiracies." As for speculations about how long the series will continue, he said, "I enjoy watching it, and I'd like it to continue, but it's better that it ends before people get tired of it, than it continues on and on. And, again as a viewer, it would be really nice if Chris Carter could decide ahead of time when it was going to end, then write to a close, rather than just having the series end in midair because no one's watching it anymore." □

## X-FILES

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utes, until she is rescued by Mulder. It's sad that THE X-FILES' first feature film should muffle its only significant female character and center its climax around such a conventional scenario. The sequence deserves Mulder as well, for it is only with those traditional "masculine" qualities of physical courage and brute strength (as well as the Well-Manicured Man's information and that lucky fall through the hole) that he rescues Scully.

The casting is impressive but many of the guest actors are wasted, especially Blythe Danner, who deserves something better. Glenna Headly, a fine comic actress, barely registers. William B. Davis comes across as just another faceless opponent, notable only for his omnipresent cigarette. The Lone Gunman (Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood, Tom Braidwood) are amusing in their brief time on screen, but serve very little purpose. Mitch Pileggi's Skinner is also given short shrift. Only Landau stands out, playing the paranoid Kurtzweil with relish, even if his

constant reappearances in alleyways eventually become unintentionally comic.

The special effects, especially the spaceship that rises up from beneath the Antarctic ice, are impressive. Mark Snow's score, sounds like generic action film music. The show's long-running motif of buried secrets—sometimes literally buried—receives an effective workout through the script and on the screen. And if you wanted answers as to What It's All About, we are given some, but much of the story remains in the dark (what role do the series' clones and shapeshifters play in all this?). But as it turns out, the aliens and the Syndicate are minor players here. The desires and fears that live in the hearts of Mulder and Scully are at this movie's center, and no one could express those thoughts and feelings better than Duchovny and Anderson, the masters of hard-boiled cynicism, sly deadpan humor and yearning tenderness all wrapped up together. It's time these two actors moved to the big screen permanently, and not just as Mulder and Scully. □

## GODZILLA

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PARK dino designs, refined Delgado's Godzilla into the version that was to appear in the film. Reportedly, Toho pressured DeBont to make his monster more closely resemble its Japanese progenitor. Insiders who have seen maquettes and drawings of the Stan Winston Godzilla describe it as a "homogenized" Godzilla incorporating features from the best Japanese designs with more lifelike dinosaur traits. The monster was dark brownish-gray in color, with spots and highlights all over its body and a patch of green skin on the belly; it had nictating eyelids and realistic eyes, teeth and claws. Its skin was scaly, but smoother and more dinosaur-like than the Toho versions, and its legs and feet were slender and supported the more crouched posture of a dinosaur. "It was similar to the Japanese Godzilla," said a special-effects man who worked on the aborted project. "It was still vaguely humanoid, but it was obvious it couldn't be a man in a suit because the proportions were different." Stan Winston Studio also designed Godzilla's opponent, The Gryphon, but sadly, this monster also was never publicly revealed. □

Excerpted from *Japan's Favorite Mons-star: the Unauthorized Biography of Godzilla*, published by ECW Press.

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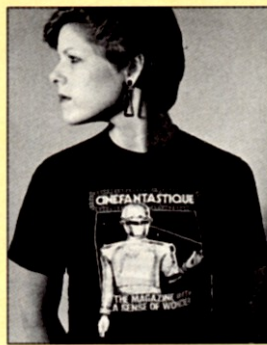
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## MILLENNIUM

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Jordan. The cabin, for Morgan, had become Frank's yellow house, where the Black are reunited, even if death soon takes Catherine away. "I didn't feel right leaving Frank without his yellow house. I think in life sometimes you search for a yellow house, but for Frank, it actually was that cabin."

Morgan and Wong wrote the season finale not knowing whether MILLENNIUM would be re-

In "The Curse of Frank Black," Frank (Lance Henriksen) takes his daughter (Brittany Tiplady) out for Halloween.



newed. They pitched several endings to Carter, who made a surprising suggestion that they kill Catherine. Morgan and Wong were taken aback, but didn't object, especially when Carter said to leave her death ambiguous. After thinking about how to make Catherine's death meaningful, Morgan discussed it with Megan Gallagher and described the scenario to her. "I told her the neat part will be that after Frank Black has done so much sacrificing for his family, ultimately it will be Catherine who makes the ultimate sacrifice. She liked that. So that had a big part in the decision to kill Catherine."

Like so many plot ideas, the plague as millennial doom emerged from the writers' research. "When I looked at the current research, I found that the thing that was most likely to get us was some sort of plague or virus," Morgan said. "I didn't really pay much attention during the mad cow scare in England, but in reading about it I found it horrifying."

One of the most striking sequences of the two-parter is the third act depicting Lara's visions of the apocalypse and her breakdown. It was shot and cut much

like a music video, accompanied by the Patti Smith song about heroin, "Horses," which had been a college favorite of Morgan's. He had always envisioned someone going crazy to it. "Editing was really difficult. Doing this was rather naive on my part," Morgan admitted. "Music videos probably have a budget close to what one of our entire episodes costs, and we had only three days to put it together. I don't think we competed very well with the kind of imagery you see on MTV. But I felt that this hasn't been done on a primetime, network drama. I'm glad we did it, but it was really, really hard."

With renewal confirmed last May by Fox, the responsibilities of running MILLENNIUM's third season have been given to Chip Jo-hannessen and newcomer Michael Duggan (EARTH 2). Michael Perry, Erin Maher and Kay Reindl have remained on staff. Chris Carter also plans to be more involved than he was second season. Morgan and Wong have departed, satisfied with their work on the show. "I'm really proud of a lot of the episodes this season," Wong said. "The frustrating thing was that we didn't find a new audience. Some of the people who watched it

the first season decided it wasn't for them and didn't come to watch it this season to see if they liked it better or see how it changed." □

## DRACULA IN INSTANBUL

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description may sound more gruesome than it is—the puncturing and cutting and stuffing all happen discreetly outside of camera view.

DRAKULA INSTANBUL'DA, by the way, like Murnau's NOSFERATU, is an unauthorized adaptation of Stoker's novel, which was still in copyright outside the United States in the early '50s. (*Dracula's* American copyright had been invalid from the very beginning—the result, apparently, of Stoker's bungled filing of copyright papers based on an American newspaper serialization, rather than book.) This may have something to do with the absence of any credit to Stoker; instead, the screenplay, by Turgut Demirag, Umit Deniz, and director Muhtar, is officially based on a novel by Ali Riza Seyfioglu, *Kazikli Voyvoda* (i.e., *The Impaling Voivode*). The film was produced during a post-war period of democratic expansion and westernization