

"Most Haunted meets The Blair Witch"



*Paranormal
Investigations Inc.*

The Legend of The 5ive

Press Pack

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FOREWORD

This horror feature is the debut from director James P Weatherall and takes the reality of TV's Most Haunted, the cold horror of the Blair witch and mixes them together with an equal measure of subtle dark humour to create a disturbing but ultimately entertaining movie.

“History supplied us with the name Anne Foster; the last woman to be convicted and hung as a witch in 1674 Northamptonshire, England, her horrific and brutal crimes the inspiration for our film... The Legend of the 5ive”

THE LEGEND OF THE 5IVE Synopsis

Log line (14 words)

A paranormal investigations team unwittingly awaken an evil presence during a live Halloween webcast.

Short Version (67 words)

All Hallows Eve – the perfect night for a ghost hunt. At least that’s what documentary filmmaker Julia Marsh was told when she joined ‘Paranormal Investigations Inc’ for their Live Halloween special.

Their mission: to unravel the mystery surrounding the legend of the ‘Screaming Spectres of Emerson Farm’. Their mistake: to awaken an arcane presence triggering a night of heart-stopping paranormal terror.

THE LEGEND OF THE 5IVE Synopsis

Long Version (251 words)

All Hallows Eve – the perfect night for your first ghost hunt, to find that irrefutable proof of live after death, at least that’s what sceptical documentary film-maker Julia Marsh was told when she joined Greg Connell and his team ‘Paranormal Investigations Inc’ for their live Halloween special.

Their location: a remote farm in deepest, darkest England. Their mission: to uncover the truth behind the legend of the ‘Screaming Spectres of Emerson farm’ known locally as ‘The 5ive’.

Rumour has it, three hundred years ago, five mysterious strangers were found butchered on the land. Their bodies placed in such a way to form the points of a giant pentagram, their deaths said to be so violent, so hideous, that you can still see their screaming forms running from whoever or whatever killed them.

The Live show begins and the World Wide Web watches as the team quickly records evidence of paranormal activity. Unexplainable images, unearthly sounds, poltergeist activity and the revelation of the name Anne Foster; the name you call upon three times to reveal the fate of the five. Spotting a rare ratings opportunity Greg Connell leads the team in an impromptu midnight séance, calling Anne Fosters name from the points of the pentagram, as the witching hour strikes.

At exactly 12.15am their live webcast inexplicitly dies and Julia and the team find themselves thrust into a horrific fight for survival. The evil they called forth will deliver the terrifying truth.

END

THE LEGEND OF THE 5IVE Production Story

Director James P Weatherall and Producer Robert Fairhurst take us through their journey of the 5ive.

How did you come up with the idea for The legend of the 5ive?

James P Weatherall: It started off with a simple “what if?” whilst watching a live ghost hunting show on late night TV. What if the stone the over excited host had throw into the darkness was suddenly and violently thrown back? What if it hit her? What if there really was a malevolent spirit with them? What would happen? Would she be injured? Die? Would the live show suddenly go off air? And what would happen if they kept the cameras rolling? Hmm...I thought, Ghost hunting, a live TV broadcast and Death. There must be a film in there somewhere and so The legend of the 5ive was born.

Lennah Seelig wrote the script with you how did she come on board?

James P Weatherall: I had just worked with Lennah on Room 36 and previously on the comedy Scrambled Eggs on toast and I knew then she’d be perfect for this project. Her writing is very tense and claustrophobic and her attention to enhancing the peculiarities of characters was great for the lighter comic moments in the script.

The writing process was quite intense as we had a tight deadline. After Robert had come on board in September we had set the shoot date for November and we needed to get the script finished so we could lock down the characters and start casting. It took a month of feverish writing (and a few disagreements) before we finally had a script, one that could be shot on location with a small crew and tight cast. Rob agreed, thankfully, and we set about pre-production.

Robert what attracted you to this project?

Robert Fairhurst: I had just caught a screening of Room 36 at a festival. I had previously worked with James a few years earlier and I decided to get in touch to congratulate him. I was focused on developing feature concepts and breaking into the market; James knew this. We decided to meet up where he very kindly introduced me to Lennah and they pitched me their idea for a feature. Now I’ve always had a passion for well told ghost stories, especially ones that are based on reality. The entire idea of a live show, paranormal investigators cut off from the rest of their team, being pursued by the evil entity that they have unwittingly called forth. It really appealed to me.

Besides the story, I was very much attracted to the fact that they were both determined; old heads on young shoulders with a firm idea of how they could tell the story. These guys lived in the real world, they were talking my kind of language, they had great low budget concept that needed developing and I could easily pull the production resources together. So we started developing the film that very week and were in production two months later.

THE LEGEND OF THE 5IVE Production Story

You describe your film as TV's Most Haunted meets The Blair Witch, how does this work?

James P Weatherall: Our initial idea was to shoot the film as though it was a live webcast. Basing the film on the team of paranormal investigators seemed the obvious choice to me, especially bearing in mind the amount of TV ghost hunt emulators you come across in the current media climate. However as the story developed we found it was necessary to add the character of Julia marsh as an external documentary maker to be the voice of the audience. As she observed the paranormal team and the night's events, so does the audience. This gave us a unique mixture of a live broadcast and documentary footage unfolding the horrifying events.

How did you bring your unique vision to the screen?

James P Weatherall: To add realism, we knew we had to shoot the film entirely handheld, but without the clichéd "shaky-cam" so we ended up making a rig for the cameras that enabled us to walk and run and still get the smooth handheld shots we needed for the film. I also wanted to convey that this was all happening for real; we would not be able to rely on cutting back and forth, if there were cuts they would have to be planned out and hidden to maintain the illusion of a live broadcast.

This meant the actors were going to have to sustain their performance over long takes five, even ten minutes. Hit marks, dialogue cues, turn to meet the camera as it passed for their expression to be caught. We also had to make sure it was all choreographed to happen just right and every key point or character lit and filmed just at the right time. In many ways it was like a theatre play, once you were committed to the scene you had to keep going. To do this took a lot of planning.

Also I wanted to get away from the usual night vision cameras in their trademark green or black and white, mainly for the style of the piece but also night vision reveals a much wider shot, you become aware of the actors surroundings. I was keen to create a claustrophobic fear of the darkness. We adapted our hand-held rig to incorporate a set of lights, that way you could only see where the lights pointed giving a real sense of a threat in the dark.

Robert Fairhurst: In researching the subject matter James & I actually attended a number of paranormal investigations with established paranormal groups. We found the experience fascinating. In most cases we studied the characters, the dynamics of the group, their activities and reactions to what they considered to be tangible evidence or indeed lack of. On other occasions we shot footage of their activities as a practical exercise in the field.

THE LEGEND OF THE 5IVE Production Story

What was the film like to shoot? Were there any challenges?

James P Weatherall: It was tough, tiring but exhilarating. We had a lot of things working against us the weather was one of the major factors. We originally chose November to shoot in because it tends to be a more stable month in England but unfortunately we shot in the wettest, windiest, coldest (temperatures got as low as minus six degrees Celsius) November on record since they began in 1914. One minute it would be raining the next it wasn't. Then the wind would pick up sweeping through the trees making it sound like waves on a beach in the middle of a force ten gale. The problem for us was the story takes place over one night and so it became quite a challenge hiding the vastly changing weather from the camera and making it look like it was a natural flow over the course of one night.

Robert Fairhurst: And there were the dogs, cow and horses! It was a working farm and invariably the sound of an animal would cut through a scene and we would have to start again but the horses, it became a real battle of man and beast.

I think it started when we were shooting one of the earlier scenes quite close to their stable and as horses do, being curious creatures, they crept close to see what was happening. I don't think they appreciated the intrusion of low budget film makers on their territory especially as we hadn't even had the courtesy of offering them a part. I believe they saw their own chance to star in a film and began taking things into their own hoofs. An actor would be giving it their all and all of a sudden, out of the darkness, a horse's head would appear in the frame. These horses were surprisingly stealthy; they'd suddenly just be there. So horse watch patrols were set up around scenes and clearly they took offence. We found our carefully preserved locations were stomped to pieces, hoof marks would mysteriously appear on back plates. Lights would cut out during takes and every time we traced the cable back, there it was! The trademark bite of an evil horse. Seriously it got so bad I even considered calling Robert Redford for help. It all came to a head one night when we were filming in the barn and we came out to find a script removed from one of our rucksacks, pages chewed, others stomped on and some rewritten... actually a couple of the suggestions weren't too bad.

This was a low budget film, did it affect the way you shot it?

Robert Fairhurst: The film was conceived from the get go to require minimal production requirements and this we worked to our advantage. We were stripped of all luxuries, we lived, worked and rested as a small, fast moving production unit and it did demand more from everyone involved. Cast and crew where living their characters, adopting the roles and this reality certainly enhance performance. It became personal to everyone involved.

THE LEGEND OF THE 5IVE Production Story

You have a witch in your film Anne Foster? Is she based on a real life character?

James P Weatherall: Anne foster is the presence, the unseen threat of the movie. In the best tradition of horror and suspense, for me anyway, it's always been the implied unseen that's the scariest thing, rather than an actor in a mask or make-up, it invokes the most powerful effect of all, the audience's imagination.

Anne Foster is inspired by a real life character, the last woman to be convicted and hung as a witch in 1674 Northamptonshire, England where our film is set. She had made an enemy of a local farmer and was said to have cursed his land, killing his sheep by sorcery, breaking their bones in their skins. We took on this same motive when killing our five characters; their bones are broken, snapped and crushed. One really interesting fact! When she was being carried off to be hanged, she was heard screaming to anyone who would listen that she should be burnt rather than hung because if she wasn't burnt she would come back.

Robert Fairhurst: It was really intriguing the effect that Anne Foster, being a real historical character, had on the cast. The owner of the farm had already told me on a recce that the land had been the sight of an ancient Anglo Saxon battle and burial site. One of our Make-up artists, a practising medium, then picked up on this history and spiritual activity in the area. Upon Googling an aerial map of the farm we discovered in the photograph the shape of a number five etched into one of the main fields by a line of ancient trees.

We were a little freaked and it did seem a little more than a coincidences. Some of the actors, being superstitious types, were wary that we may be tempting fate; and yet here we were asking them to stand alone in the darkness summoning the presence of a convicted and executed witch..... Any gush of wind, any twig that snapped in the darkness became to them the very, very real presence of Anne herself.

What was your cast like to work with?

James P Weatherall: They were great. We worked with them all to build strong interesting characters for the screen. After all it is a film of talking heads set against the black night and therefore integral that the personality of the cast holds the audience's attention. We threw a lot at them, it was very tiring, and we covered a lot of ground running every night. Then there were long waits for the weather to clear and then they'd have to go out and perform often long scenes through bitter cold, windy weather but it was a real team effort, everybody bonded, and everybody went above and beyond what we asked of them. They supported the shoot all the way and I was happy to let characters live the moment, to be inspired and go off the script. I think if you have a good story everyone can see its potential and want to work hard to bring it to the screen.

Cast Biographies

Lennah Seelig – (Julia Marsh)

Lennah is passionate about character acting and is a highly emotive method actress. She has had the pleasure of acting in many different types of entertainment; slap-stick comedy, Shakespeare, radio, short films and promotional work. Her wealth of experience enlightens her interpretation of characters from the script and adds depth to her performance.

Her first public performance was with the Youth Theatre playing Hermia in A Midsummer's Night Dream at The Royal Theatre Northampton. From there she was hooked and continued performing with the theatre for several years. Lennah graduated from Bretton Hall College, The University of Leeds in 1998 with a first class honours degree in acting, writing and directing for theatre. From there she studied under the artistic director of the Contact Theatre Manchester. During this time Lennah played various different characters such as Nora from A Doll's House, Katerina, The taming of the shrew and Natalie from A Month in the Country.

Most recently Lennah has been working extensively within short films including the tense thriller noir Room 36 which played the international short film circuit to rave reviews. When the opportunity came up to develop and co-write 'The 5ive' Lennah seized the chance and open up the opportunity to fulfil her ambition by stepping into her first feature film role as Julia Marsh.

Greg Tanner – (Greg Connell)

Greg is a friendly, passionate and hard-working actor with a real love for the film industry. He started in his chosen career in the RAF whilst working abroad where the theatre scene is very popular. Then at the age of 28 when he left HM military forces and attended the prestigious Academy Drama School in London. Since then he continues to attend numerous acting courses at 'The Actors Centre' in Covent Garden's where he is a full member.

Greg's has a wealth of experience under his belt including work in television, feature films, documentaries, radio and commercials. Greg's Television career has included roles in Eastenders, Holby City, Spooks, Tonight with Trevor McDonald, Mile High, and Filth: The Mary Whitehouse Story, BBC television film, with Julie Walters. His film career includes roles in features such as Hard Shoulder, Bullet Boy and Shaun of the Dead.

Cast Biographies

Lee J Higgs – (Don G. Black)

Lee is a highly charismatic actor with a broad spectrum of experience and a strong physical presence. His bug for acting began at the age of 21 when he moved from Edinburgh to Norwich taking up live action role play. Creating, performing and sustaining a character, often for a whole weekend. Frequently being part of the plot team, creating, guiding and shaping the story through his character, he soon found his heart lay in performance.

Perusing this further Lee became part of a professional organization appearing as authentic costume characters for Star Wars – Lucas film, promoting their films and merchandise internationally at such places as The Odeon cinema Leicester Square, Monaco casino and TV stations including, ITV, CH4, MTV and VH1.

Keen to widen his experience further Lee went on to appear in ITV's historical documentary, Killer Queen and stepped onto the stage in Safe House which played at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2010.

Lee has often been quoted saying 'I'm acting, I'm happy.'

Emma Kendrick – (Joe Weaverly)

Emma is a hardworking, enthusiastic actor. Her love of acting stems from studying 'Othello' in sixth form with an English teacher who was passionate about performance. Emma then went on to complete a BA in Drama at the University of the West of England after which she became assistant director for the Centre of Performing Arts. Emma's passion for films led her to complete an intensive screen acting course at Redfords Theatre. Most recently Emma co-founded Broken Pipe Theatre, which launched in 2010 with a brand new show, *Safe House*, performing at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe receiving three and four star reviews.

Trevor Preston – (John Harrison)

Trevor has acted in a few independent films and a recent music video. Trevor's main area is historical consultancy for movies and books as he is currently studying for his Doctorate in History. Future projects include consulting on a major new feature film in which he also has a small role, co-writing a feature film about the cold war and working with both James and Lennah in a consulting role on upcoming projects. Trevor is also currently writing a one-woman musical show about WW2 for the Camden Fringe Festival in August.

Filmmakers Biographies

Director – James P Weatherall

James is a highly visual film maker that is particularly known for his incredible style towards film making. His knowledge and understanding of the horror genre is clearly paramount and translates to the screen seamlessly to enhance the thrill of the film.

From a young age, James P Weatherall had a passion for film and felt the desire to become a film director. So armed with a video camera and a few willing, and unwilling, friends he set out to make his masterpiece...

After graduating with honours from his local college James was accepted into the London International Film School studying “The Art & Technique of Film”, specialising in the fields of Directing, Editing & Cinematography.

James’ earlier professional career blossomed after he created several successful music promos with his unique visual style. However his passion lay with film and thereafter created short films such as ‘Needle’ and ‘A.1.1.4.H’. His latest directing projects include the comedy ‘Scrambled Eggs and Toast’ and the tense thriller-noir ‘Room 36,’ James directorial style ensured both films played the International short film festival circuit, the latter to rave reviews. From this he decided to move on to directing his first feature film and developing his natural talent.

Writer – Lennah Seelig

Lennah’s passion for creating stories began at a very early age, encouraging the neighbourhood kids to take part in her home productions and even charging their parents an entrance fee.

Her career in film began in 2001 when she worked for Hi8us television on a series of short dramas set in and around the local authorities care facilities; followed by an offer to embark on a production position at a local film studio. Recognising immediately how her training in theatre could compliment her approach to filmmaking Lennah began to pave her way towards the commercial film industry, creating and exploring her own unique style through a collection of short films.

The most recent ‘Donna Luciana’ a nostalgic ghost story (translated into Italian with English subtitles) offered an exciting challenge which Lennah was keen to embrace and so she stepped behind the camera to direct this fantastical story and bring it to screen.

Now Lennah’s attention is firmly set on feature length productions ‘The 5ive’ being followed by another paranormal script ‘The Haunting of House 49’, inspired by true events. “I think there is always an appeal in the supernatural. I and I’m sure many others are fascinated by the anomalies between life and death. It’s a great subject for film. I’m sure, some way or another, the theme will continue in some of my future scripts.

Filmmakers Biographies

Producer – Robert Fairhurst

Roberts's passion of storytelling spans from classic to pioneering cinema, from avant-garde theatre to the campfire ghost stories he would tell his children.

Starting out a stage hand in his local Rep Northampton Royal Theatre, Robert began to soak up everything around him, appreciating the technical skills required to create an illusion and the craft of encapsulating an audience to suspending their disbelief with story. This fuelled a passion that led to a career as writer, producer and director of mainstream music promos, television commercials, stage shows and films.

He recently finished co-directing the feature length animations for *Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of War of the Worlds*, with Daniel Osgerby. And co-produced *Rain* – an International multi-award winning script, written and directed by David Mahmoudieh, starring Neve Campbell and Dakota Blue Richards.

In 2008 he wrote and directed *Find A Way Out* – a poignant Urban Drama about a group of musicians on the verge of a breakup or breakthrough. Robert producing credits include, *A.1.1.4.H* and *Bloodties*, commissioned by the UK Film Council in May 2006 and was selected by NESTA to explore rapid prototyping in film.

Robert currently develops and produces film and television projects through his companies *Retribution Films Ltd* and *Aspect Ratio Productions*. Roberts's subsidiary company, *Big Noise Studios*, encourages and engages musicians and artists in the local community by providing rehearsal space, equipment and recording facilities.

Roberts's love of music has led to establishing *Big Noise Records*, a music publishing label for artists featuring amongst others *Civilians* and *Ticket to Paris* to further create and encourage the use of music in film.

Robert is a member of PACT, *Raindance* and NESTA.

Director's Statement

It started off with a simple "what if?" whilst watching a live ghost hunting show on late night TV.

What if the stone the over excited host had throw into the darkness was suddenly and violently thrown back? What if it hit her? What if there really was a malevolent spirit with them? What would happen? Would she be injured? Die? Would the live show suddenly go off air? And what would happen if they kept the cameras rolling? Hmm... Ghost hunting, a live TV broadcast and Death. There must be a film in there somewhere and so the 5ive was born.

What if I go down the pretentious route for this statement, expressing that I wanted to make an experimental film with no cuts in a scene, to make an ensemble piece working more like a theatre production than a film; shooting in long uncut takes letting the action play out in camera rather than relying on editing, to have no real visible background in the scenes, just the actors and me shooting their performance. To have no music in the film (to heighten tension and scares), to make a film based in a live TV Broadcast and not on one - it later became the internet. To make a film based in heightened reality.

What if I don't and just say that I set out to make a unique, entertaining, scary thrill ride of a film which happens to encompass numerous takes, although they are invisible (I highlight this fact as I am also the editor and it was hard work) a pure escapist film for the "paranormal generation". A film that would haunt anybody who watched it and a film that had the all important "What if... this is real?"

What if I truly believe that escapism is something we all really respond to when done well. We, the audience, are there to be entertained, thrilled and scared and '*The 5ive*' has surpassed my expectations on all these levels. If I have proved one thing then it's that you can make a scary and thoroughly entertaining film, as long as you have a camera, great crew, great actors and an imagination.

One last thought... What if I'm lying? What if I actually got hold of real footage from a real show from that fateful night? What if what you are just about to watch (or have watched) is real? Hmm? Think about it!

James P Weatherall

Cast Credits

Julia Marsh

Greg Connell

Don G. Black

Joe Weaverly

John Harrison

Sam McCready

Mark Jones

Marrick (soundman)

Old Man Joe

Julia's cameraman

PI team cameraman

Lennah Seelig

Greg Tanner

Lee J Higgs

Emma Kendrick

Trevor Preston

Lee Fairhurst

Damien Hale

Murray Beets

Les Necus

Jamie Weatherall

Rob Fairhurst

Crew Credits

Director / Editor	James P Weatherall
Producer	Robert Fairhurst
Writer/ Producer	Lennah Seelig
Director of Photography	James Roberts
Music Composer	Paris Munro
Sound Design/Engineer	Joe Willes
Production Designer	Elizabeth Kelsey
Production Assistant	Emma Moss
Assistant Director	Lee Higgs
	Emma Kendrick
Runner	Aaron Niven
Sound Recordist	Merlup Snilttski
Location Manager	Simon Hussy
SPFX Make-up Supervisor	Phillip E Lindsey
SPFX Make-up	Deborah Grantham
	Kaz Preston
Make-up	Kirsten Jones-Tear
Hair	Michelle Clarke
Compositing	TK-Lee-FX

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