

FANGS • FOR THE • MEMORIES

It's been 21 years since big-haired vamps The Lost Boys ran riot. Now, after decades in Development Hell, they're back. But what's this? Feuding Coreys? Kiefer's half-brother? And straight-to-DVD? **Empire** heads on set to uncover the gory truth...

WORDS **NICK DE SEMLYEN**

THERE'S SOMETHING BITING ON THE SET OF **LOST BOYS 2**, AND SURPRISINGLY IT'S NOT A VAMPIRE WITH A MULLET. IN FACT,

it's the cold, the kind of bone-aching, finger-numbing, malevolent freeze that could give an ice cube shivers and make a walrus think twice before leaving the house. The reason for the big chill is not just the season (late September, 2007) or the time (midnight going on 1am), but the location: the uppermost slopes of Mount Seymour, a giant Canadian peak overlooking Vancouver. Put simply, we're standing inside a big cloud, in the dark, in the middle of nowhere. Fun.

So the pressing question is, why the hell *are* we here, huddled around a heater with a circle of crew members, passing round sets of gel hand-warmers? After all, we're not witnessing the making of a cutting-edge blockbuster, or even a smart arthouse project, but a straight-to-DVD sequel to a horror film made over 20 years ago. The man in the director's chair isn't Peter Jackson, or Steven Spielberg, or even McG, but P. J. Pesce, the creator of *From Dusk Till Dawn* 3 and a guy whose previous appearances in **Empire** have been confined to Kim Newman's *Video Dungeon*. And the actor sitting across from us, trying to defrost between takes, isn't world-famous celebrity and Golden Globe-winner Kiefer Sutherland, but barely-heard-of Harold & Kumar Escape From Guantanamo Bay star and empty-mantlepieced Angus Sutherland, Kiefer's younger half-brother.

The answer to that question, and the reason everyone is perched on this mountain in the first

place, is simple. Like its dubiously coiffured bloodsucker stars, *The Lost Boys* is a movie that refuses to die. Two decades on from Joel Schumacher's 1987 camp horror classic — in which Kiefer led a gang of vampires terrorising the Californian coastal town of Santa Carla — and there are still hordes of fans able to quote chunks of its juicy dialogue (“Death by stereo!”) or hum its Goth-rock soundtrack. Hence the 2008 revival, tying neatly in with the resurrection of other '80s staples like *Short Circuit*, *RoboCop* and *The A-Team*. And hence the blizzard of rumours, veiled threats and offended forum posts that revival has triggered, even though the film will never see the inside of a multiplex. *Lost Boys* fanboys, it seems, are sensitive types.

“What do I say to the people making negative comments?” asks Pesce. “Fuck off! Blow me. I say, bring it on, bitch. Take me one-on-one and I’ll kick your ass!” He breaks into a laugh. “No, you know what I say? I say I totally understand, and if I was not directing this movie and I was out there, I’m sure I’d be rolling my eyes, too. If I heard about surfing vampires, I’d be going, ‘Oh Christ, that sounds like a pile of manure.’ But the reality of the fact is that it’s not just surfing vampires. It’s a lot more than that.”

Italian-American Pesce is a colourful character. Tonight, as set dressers fiddle with flaming barrels outside the *Lost Boys* crypt-lair (in reality a disused sewage treatment plant), he roams around performing magic tricks with a deck of cards, quoting Orson Welles and discussing the recent works of Wong Kar-Wai. It’s not exactly what you’d expect from

There will be blood... Left, from top: going for the jugular; vampire hunter Edgar Frog (Corey Feldman) and Chris (Tad Hilgenbrink); one of the new *Lost Boys*. Above and main: Feldman in 1987 and 2008.

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BRIEFING

**Lost Boys 2:
The Tribe**

Released: September 8, available only on double-pack DVD with the original film

Directed by: P. J. Pesce

Starring: Corey Feldman, Tad Hilgenbrink, Autumn Reeser, Angus Sutherland

The original: The 1987 hit about teen vampires made stars of Kiefer Sutherland, Jason Patric and (for a while) Coreys Feldman and Haim.

Twenty-one years later...

Chris [Hilgenbrink] and his kid sister [Reeser] move to the Californian surf town of Luna Bay — only to find it infested with vampires...

“IF I WASN’T DIRECTING THIS MOVIE, I’M SURE I’D BE ROLLING MY EYES TOO.” P. J. PESCE

someone who masterminded *Sniper 3* with Tom Berenger. But Pesce seems completely self-aware, conscious that he is, as he puts it, “in the minor leagues”, and happy to admit that, “While I’m extremely proud of the *From Dusk Till Dawn* prequel, nobody will ever take it seriously.” He may be under fire from all directions, but he’s confident he’ll surprise everyone by delivering a sequel with all the charm of Schumacher’s movie, plus a sizable dose of gory mayhem. “Severed heads being punted around like footballs, spinal cords hitting people in the face, blood everywhere... As someone said on set the other day, ‘Okay, this is starting to become *Lost Boys*-slash-*Irreversible*!’”

NO, YOU WERE NOT HALLUCINATING — YOU DID READ THE WORDS “SURFING VAMPIRES” TWO PARAGRAPHS UP.

In fact, the new film, officially titled *Lost Boys 2: The Tribe*, sees the Boys modernised as adrenaline junkies, riding waves at night and skateboarding while holding onto the backs of motorcycles doing 150 miles per hour. The surfing was a holdover from the first draft of the script Pesce was given, in which the vampires spent their off-time on the beach waiting for the ultimate tube. The idea got canned, just one more casualty in this sequel’s tortuously lengthy development period. Most infamous of all was

talk of *The Lost Girls*, a mooted re-envisioning of the first film with an all-female vamp gang.

“Oy vey, kill me now!” laughs Pesce when we bring the subject up. “That just sounded like a pile of steaming shite. It sounds like the equivalent of... what was that fucking horrible Western they did? *Bad Girls*?”

Another non-fan of the idea is Corey Feldman, the original ’80s lost boy who starred in the first film at the height of his fame and returns to the second a lower-profile but wiser man. “I was not thrilled with the *Lost Girls* concept,” Feldman says. “To me that was always kind of half-assed. I never really signed onto the campaign. It seemed like a pointless venture.”

His enthusiasm for this movie, though, is obvious. The scene currently being prepped involves Feldman and the movie’s leading man, Tad Hilgenbrink (aka Stifler’s brother in *American Pie* spin-off *Band Camp*), driving up to the entrance of a monster-infested mine-shaft in a souped-up Range Rover. Statuettes of the Virgin Mary adorn the dashboard; a logo reading “Frog Brothers” is printed on the vehicle’s side. It can mean only one thing: Feldman is back as vampire-hunter extraordinaire Edgar Frog, global scourge of garlic-haters. His arsenal of weapons has been greatly beefed up, as has his screen time, and Feldman, about to complete his last day of filming, is eager to talk us through it: “My vamp artilleries, as I call them, include a plethora of stakes — from wooden ones to metal and carbon fibre types



Left: Feldman unleashes a rocket-propelled holy water balloon at the undead. Right: one of the new breed, post-light snack.



Above: Gnarly! Our hero, hot on the trail of blood-craving boarders. Left: Angus Sutherland as crypt-keeper Shane. Right: P. J. Pesce with pal.

— and an air-propelled rocket-launcher for holy water balloons. Oh, plus a garlic bolo, which is always nice.”

The atmosphere on set is light, as Feldman bops around, dispensing hugs, wisecracking about the relentless night shoots (“I haven’t felt like this since I smoked crack!”) and receiving a farewell gift from the crew: an ornate prop crucifix. But there is undeniably a long shadow hanging over the proceedings, and it’s cast by a person who’s not even here. As fans of faded child stars will know, we’re talking about Corey Haim, Feldman’s old friend, fellow former drug addict and *Lost Boys* co-star, who recently stirred up one of the biggest message-board storms in eons.

The bizarre tale of Haim’s non-involvement in the sequel can be pieced together with fragments from various websites, including the Coreys’ own blogs, and it goes a little something like this: on July 29, 2007, an episode of reality show *The Two Coreys* aired, showing footage of Feldman breaking the news to his friend that a) there was to be a *Lost Boys* sequel and b) only one Corey’s services were required. Haim broke down in tears on camera, whereupon Feldman set about trying to get his buddy added to the



cast list. He succeeded, only for Haim not to turn up on set, ostensibly due to visa issues, an excuse which no-one seems to believe. Since then, the two have attacked each other via media interviews. So, have they really fallen out? Is the whole thing a publicity stunt? And if someone’s lying, *who*?

“Essentially everything you read on my side was true,” retorts Feldman with a grin. “And we all know who the cool one is. No, what happened on the show was real. The original concept I was told about did not involve Haim and had a very small cameo from me, and that was what I told him about and it broke him up. I told him, ‘I’m not doing it without you,’ and they came back to me five different times and I turned them down over and over and over. Finally, they came back to me at my birthday party, where ironically all the *Lost Boys*, including Jamison Newlander and Corey, were there in one place. They said, >>

**THE LOST AND
FOUND BOYS**

BEYOND THE COREYS, WE TRACE THE FATES OF THE OTHER LOST BOYS...

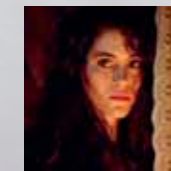
JASON PATRIC

(MICHAEL EMERSON)

Having returned from the dead after the debacle that was *Speed 2*: Cruise Control, Patric has done impressive turns in lo-fi fare such as *Narc* and *In The Valley Of Elah*. Will next be seen in star-stuffed courtroom drama *My Sister’s Keeper*.

**JAMI GERTZ (STAR)**

Little has been seen of Gertz on the big screen since her turn as Patric’s vampish love interest. Aside from a supporting role in *Twister*, she has mostly kept herself busy with TV — the eagle-eyed among you may have spotted her on *Seinfeld*, *ER* and *Ally McBeal*.

**ALEX WINTER**

(MARKO)

Despite being the first vamp to bite the dust, Winter found immortality as Bill S. Preston, Esq. in the *Bill & Ted* movies. He later forged a second career as a director — FYI, he’s behind the all-CG Tony The Tiger Frosties ads.

**BROOKE MCCARTER**

(PAUL)

Best known as the blood-sucker who took an early (holy water-filled) bath, McCarter has now all but retired from acting. Throughout the ’90s he was Corey Haim’s manager; he now lives in Florida, running his own production company.

**BILLY WIRTH**

(DWAYNE)

“Death by stereo” was only the start for Wirth. While his movie roles dried up, he’s been busy fronting LA rock band Dust N’ Bones and appearing on *American Gladiators*, where he famously hit Gemini in the back of the head with a powerball.

**KIEFER SUTHERLAND**

(DAVID)

With a career that has rollercoasted as wildly as his personal life, the son of Donald’s post-*Lost Boys* career hasn’t been massively consistent, but it is as the clock-racing star of 24 that he has found lasting fame. He’ll next be seen on the big screen in horror pic *Mirrors*. **GLEN FERRIS**





Clockwise from left: Feldman takes a break from monster-murdering in the Frogmobile; the two Coreys in a publicity shot for their reality TV show, *The Two Coreys*; on set of the original with co-star Jamison Newlander; Saxophone Man now (with Pesce) and then.

"IT'S BEEN TOUGH, A LOT OF NIGHT SHOTS. I HAVEN'T FELT LIKE THIS SINCE I SMOKED CRACK!" COREY FELDMAN

'Listen, we've rewritten the script, you're a major part of it, we're gonna incorporate Haim and Newlander — *now* will you do it?

"Last time I saw Haim it was like, 'See you in Vancouver!'" he continues. "I had put it in my contract that I wouldn't do it without him. Then I got here and there was no Corey. When I heard what was happening I gave him a call and asked him what was going on and never got a clear answer. So I was obviously taken aback when he tried to turn around and make it my fault. Because in a town with many inconsistencies, there's not many people willing to go out on a limb and risk losing a job because of a counterpart. Will I see him when I go back to LA tomorrow? No."

Despite that vow, the latest word on the fiasco is that they've reconciled some of their differences (the second season of *The Two Coreys* airs in July), if not many of them (a recent blog entry by Feldman says, "Maybe at the end of the day Haim and I will be able to resurrect our broken friendship, despite the fact we may never resolve our professional relationship"). Oh, and Haim apparently *will* turn up in *Lost Boys 2: The Tribe* in an unspecified cameo.

T HE FASHION HAS BEEN RADICALLY REHAULED, AS EVIDENCED BY A PARADE OF THE NEW VAMPIRES WHEELING THEIR MOTORBIKES UP

to the crypt entrance for the next scene, but what *has* this sequel kept over from its predecessor? Pesce's answer is not exactly what we expected.

"Remember that guy with the saxophone at that cheesy party? Dude, we brought him back. I mean, not the real guy, but we hired a big, fat extra, wrote 'Tips' across his belly and made him play sax. 'Cause when you're watching *Lost Boys*, all of a sudden it's like, 'Aaargh!' In a horror movie, that's truly the most horrifying moment, when you see that guy pumping his hips. I mean, *who* greased him up like that? Such a bizarre character. So this is our little homage. We thought, 'Where would that guy be 20 years later?' Maybe on the street, begging for change."

Erm, okay... And as well as Saxophone Man, we're promised the reprise of iconic track *Cry Little Sister*, by Gerard McMann, albeit in a new, "thrashing" form. Will these touchstones, along with some Coreys and a Sutherland, win

fans over? Or will *Lost Boys 2: The Tribe* end up in bargain bins, alongside the likes of *Blues Brothers 2000* and *Return Of The Fly*?

"I'm in the ghetto of the genre filmmaking world," muses Pesce. "But I like to work and I like to invest everything I do with a certain level of quality and care. I think of myself as this little Italian tailor. There's a lot of bad-mouthing going on, but as a director you just get used to that. You become inured to it... I mean, even Quentin Tarantino; on *Kill Bill* all the grips were going, 'That guy's an idiot, he doesn't know what he's doing.' I went online recently and it was like opening Pandora's Box — GRRRAAAHHH!!! — all this screaming and yelling about this movie I'm making."

But surely, we ask, somewhere, *someone* is saying something nice about it?

Pesce thinks it over for a moment, then laughs again: "Yeah — my mom."

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>> *Lost Boys 2: The Tribe* is available in a DVD double-pack with *The Lost Boys* from September 8 and will be reviewed in the October issue.