



Presents

LONDON VOODOO

RUNNING TIME: 98 mins

CERTIFICATE: TBC

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Ref:230603.9

Principal Cast

Doug Cockle	Lincoln Mathers
Sara Stewart	Sarah Mathers
Grace Sprott	Beth Mathers
Vonda Barnes	Kelly
Trisha Mortimer	Fiona
Sven-Bertil Taube	Lars
Michael Nyqvist	Magnus
Jacqueline Boatswain	Ruth
David Webber	Ray
Roy Borrett	Jeff
Dickon Tolson	Lee
Basil King	Boom
Steve O'Halloran	Roger (Lincoln's boss)
Carmen Abela	Sue (Lincoln's secretary)
Kevin Stone	Realtor (estate agent)

Filmmakers

Robert Pratten	Director, Writer, Producer
Patrick Jackson	Cinematographer
Ryan Chandler	Sound Recordist
Matthew Jessee	Editor
Fiona O'Connor	Costume Designer
Michelle Watson	Hair & Make-up Designer
Steven Severin	Composer
Kasper Cornish	Choreographer
Helen Pratten	Executive Producer

Short Synopsis

When ambitious New York analyst Lincoln Mathers (Doug Cockle) relocates his family to England, his wife (Sara Stewart) unearths London's disturbing past and becomes hostage to an ancient spirit.

When Mathers finally notices that his wife is not who she was, he's forced to accept that his family's only salvation lies in a leap a faith.

Synopsis

LINCOLN MATHERS (**Doug Cockle**) is an ambitious New York analyst trying to balance work and family life. He and his attractive wife SARAH (**Sara Stewart**) and daughter BETH (18 month baby, Grace Sprott) relocate to England and move into an old Victorian house in Greenwich, London.

Things appear to be going well until Sarah uncovers a buried tomb in the house cellar. She convinces Lincoln to keep it a secret but it soon seems as though everyone might know something about their find: people like the kind Bohemian woman FIONA (**Trisha Mortimer**) or KELLY (**Vonda Barnes**) the troubled au pair with designs on Lincoln.

At work, Lincoln is given an important project to prove himself and it forces him to neglect the changes occurring at home: food is going rotten sooner and flowers are dying, Sarah is taking less care of her appearance and becoming more sexually overt. She's also drawing and sculpting symbols that she doesn't understand.

Local voodoo followers RAY (**David Webber**) and RUTH (**Jacqueline Boatswain**) believe that the spirit of an African warrior from West Africa now inhabits Sarah's body. They make plans for an exorcism but when they approach Lincoln to get him involved, he refuses to listen.

It's not until Ray's accidental death and Sarah's worsening state of mind that Lincoln accepts Fiona's offer to help. She tells him that he must place his trust in voodoo. Still Lincoln isn't ready to believe and we learn that Fiona has her own agenda – she's preparing her own ritual to be reunited with her dead husband and she needs Sarah's involvement.

While Lincoln is out, Kelly, believing that Sarah's erratic behaviour is due to mental illness, sedates her with sleeping tablets – leaving the way clear to make an advance on Lincoln. But things don't go her way when he has to work all through the night to complete a presentation for the Swedish client represented by LARS (**Sven-Bertil Taube**) and MAGNUS (**Michael Nyqvist**). Lincoln oversleeps at the table and in the morning rushes to work tired and unwashed. But when he lies about having been up all night with Beth, he makes an unexpected bond with his client and he realises that his priorities have been wrong all along.

Feeling low but with this new realisation, Lincoln comes home to tell Sarah that he's going to change and he'll put her and Beth first. But it's all too late. Sarah has already packed to leave and reacts violently to Lincoln's plea for her to stay. Sarah says she'll stay for one night only on the basis that Fiona comes over. But when Fiona arrives all hell breaks loose. It's the final straw that pushes Lincoln to turn to the voodooists for help and take a leap of faith.

Initiated into the voodoo cult, Lincoln races back home to find the house desecrated with crude iconography and deadly traps sprung to prevent him capturing Sarah.

In a breathtaking climax, Lincoln holds a violent and frenzied Sarah captive and struggles to make an emotional connection with a wife held hostage to a warrior spirit.

He's a young man that wants the best for his family. But when a spirit possesses his wife, we are reminded that true love must be fought for and won. This supernatural thriller is told through strong characters, violent confrontations and erotic revelations.

London Voodoo tells us that true love is only possible with sacrifice.

Director's Statement

"This is an intelligent psychological horror with moments we can all relate to and others, with the grace of God, we never will."

This is not a film about Voodoo

Forget whatever you think you know about voodoo films because this one is a million miles from anything you've seen before. It's not a slasher flick or a teen horror. It's not a film that uses CGI effects or prosthetic monsters and there are no zombies - flesh-eating or otherwise. It's a gripping psychological horror made possible by outstanding acting and lots of heart-thumping suspense.

This is a high concept, mass-audience genre film that satisfies the soul: the characters are three-dimensional and believable. We share their journey as they plunge from daydream into nightmare and we care about whether they live or die. We're right there on the edge of our seats, piecing together the clues and making decisions for them.

The pace of the film increases almost exponentially –starting at a comfortably fast pace and finishing with an adrenaline-pumping full-throttle supersonic rush. But don't worry if you're faint-hearted, because along the way there are spellbinding, beautiful moments to catch your breath. When the film's 100mins are over you'll want to see it all again.

Universal themes

This is a film about a marriage breakdown caused by a husband's ambition and exacerbated by extraordinary (supernatural) events. There are moments we can all relate to and some we pray we never will: the balancing of work and family life, the anxieties of moving to a new community, the days when things just don't go right and the days when the best we can do is take a leap of faith.

London Voodoo is a great supernatural thriller in the tradition of *Don't Look Now*, *The Tenant* and *Rosemary's Baby* – it's contemporary, suspenseful, eerie and erotic. Its premise is that "true love" is only possible with sacrifice and while the plot scares us, the sub-plots warm us with explorations of the nature of love and relationships; of ambition and pride.

Attention to detail

This is possibly the first feature film to treat voodoo with respect and show it as a misunderstood religion that can offer solutions for people in their every day lives (as well as the exceptional circumstances at the film's climax!). The film plays with the audience's expectations of voodoo as a force for evil until it's time to reveal that voodoo can actually be a force for good. Desk research into voodoo, Santeria, the history of West Africa and the Amazonian-type warriors of Dahomey was conducted using the Internet and books and enhanced with first-hand trips to Brazil, Cuba, Miami and New Orleans.

Production Notes

The Road To Voodoo: Script Development

The idea for London Voodoo matured over the 12 month period before writing actually began in November 2001.

"I took the commuter boat along the Thames every day into film school and I'd think about the ships that used to clog the river in its heyday. I slowly formulated a story about a guy called the Ferryman who used to haul dead bodies out of the Thames to keep the shipping lanes clear. I wondered what if he rifled the pockets of these dead people and one day found a cursed talisman from West Africa?"

From an initial 40 page story outline, the script was developed over 12 drafts before sending it out to potential cast and crew. Tweaking and honing then continued until draft 16 became the shooting script. Interestingly, there's little evidence of Robert's initial idea in the shooting script and only about 60% of first draft made it to the final draft.

After two years at the London Film School and having directed seven short films, Robert took 9 months to write London Voodoo.

The Production Schedule

The first people to join the project were cinematographer Patrick Jackson, editor Matthew Jessee and documentary maker Daneeta Loretta Saft. All had worked on previous Zen Film projects and knew what to expect!

After completion of the script in Sept 2002, work began on the themes, colours and look of the film. This continued until the start of pre-production on 6th January 2003.

The production team based itself at the Three Mills Studios in London's East End and worked for around 5 weeks before filming began on 10th February, with the first sets being built two weeks before the start of principal photography.

All interiors were shot in the studio except the offices scenes, the New York apartment and the voodoo house. The exteriors were shot at locations Robert had used for inspiration during script writing: South Dock Marina, Greenwich, Bow, Strand and, of course, Blackheath Common where it is said that hundreds of bodies lie buried after the great London plague!

"One of the nice things about scouting locations was meeting the people that lived and worked in these places. Mr Kahn, for example, owner of The Sitar Indian restaurant in the Strand had put up with me and my noisy friends' drunken eating for years. He always recognised me or Helen and would shake our hands but we never knew each other by name. It was very touching to hear his mystical experiences back in Bangladesh and how he related to the themes of London Voodoo".

The production shot in the studios for 3 weeks, went on location for 2 (while the downstairs house and cellar sets were broken apart and the upstairs house and houseboat sets were built) and came back into the studios for the last 2 weeks.

Well almost. The last day of shooting was at the New York apartment... in London's Limehouse district.

The Climax

The most challenging days of the shoot were undoubtedly those at Blackheath Common where the film reaches it's "tour de force" climax. The shoot took place over two nights with a full crew, twenty extras, three smoke and four rain machines.

“It was hugely exciting” explains Line Producer Ben Siegle, “and some elements had a circus feel to them: Robert was the ringmaster and each of us had our role to play”.

Using the common’s pond as a voodoo “luck bath” caused some issues. Filming and rehearsing in the cold, rain and mud at the pond’s edge made life difficult for all concerned.

Sara Stewart, who plays the lead female role, had to endure the elements first hand: “It was an extreme sport; it was a rush – but a rush because you survived. It was intense!”

Casting

When it came to casting, Robert cut pictures from magazines and arranged them into full-length photo-fits of how he saw the characters. He then searched through Spotlight, the UK casting directory, looking for actors with the right look and experience.

“We were fortunate in that we didn’t need to rely on pre-sales for our financing and so were not required to ask well-known but potentially less ideal actors in the lead roles. I don’t think many directors get to choose their cast from as wide a pool of actors but being your own producer and being married to the exec producer helps!”

For the supporting roles, Robert cast actors that he’d worked with before on his short films but for the main roles, up to ten actors were auditioned for each part. The auditions were videotaped, then watched back again with Patrick Jackson (cinematographer), Ed Siegle (2nd AD) and Helen who ultimately had the final call.

“I had a few favourites for the lead roles who I really hoped would take the parts offered and I met with these actors in a coffee shop in London. I wanted a chance to meet them in person rather than rely on a 10 minute audition piece” Robert explains.

“Sure, you can tell if someone can act in the first 10 seconds of the audition but you don’t know what it’s going to be like to spend 8 weeks of your life with them. Meeting up also gave me the important opportunity of selling myself and the project to them.”

Working with Actors

After the actors had accepted their parts, Robert asked them to watch several films that would prepare them for the mood and style of London Voodoo. It would also help them to know how to pitch their performances. The films were *Don’t Look Now*, *Rosemary’s Baby*, *The Tenant* and *The Contender*.

The director and his cast got together for rehearsals the week before shooting.

“The art department marked out the geography of the sets in the rehearsal room so that everyone knew where tables would be and where the kitchen was in relation to the living room, for example. It helped us get all the basics out of the way so that on set the actors could focus on the moment of the scene”.

The believability of London Voodoo comes from an attention to detail and to great acting.

“One of the most rewarding things for me as a writer is seeing the characters come to life and watching the actors add new dimensions to their parts. As a director though, it’s important to make sure that the new dimensions are consistent across the scenes, with the plot and with the themes of the film. Most of my discussions with the cast were on interpretation of the subtext or how I wanted a particular slant on events.”

Musical Influences

Many writers and directors listen to music while conjuring ideas and images.

“One of my favourite songs of all time is *Icon(s)* by Siouxsie and The Banshees – it’s so dark, powerful and moving. When I was writing the Blackheath scene I listened to it over and over, rehearsing the shots and action in my head. When it came to choosing a composer, there was only one place I was going to look first.”

From the beginning, in 1976, throughout their 20 year career, Steven Severin was lyricist, songwriter and bassist with Siouxsie and The Banshees. Since 1997, Steven has released several critically-acclaimed solo albums on his own record label, RE:.

Robert first emailed Steven via his website and asked if he would be interested in writing the music for a supernatural thriller that dealt with issues of love and sacrifice. Robert explains:

"The Banshees were in America on their *7 Year Itch* reunion tour at the time so it took a while to get the script to Steven. When he emailed me again to say he liked the script and wanted to do the film I couldn't believe it. Here was a man that (a) was not only at the birth of punk music but influential in its development (b) was still going strong and (c) was ready to take a gamble on an unknown fan who'd written his first feature script!"

"We first met up in an informal restaurant in North London. I think that I was more awestruck than nervous. Anyway, Steven was really cool about everything and having him onboard significantly helped the project: it gave us a morale boost and signalled to others that somebody outside my circle of friends thought the film had potential".

They continued to meet at intervals before filming and Steven came to visit London Voodoo on set and on location during filming.

Each week after the first month of editing, Steven was mailed rough cuts of the film as QuickTime files so that he could start sketching ideas.

"Steven has written the entire score for the film and it's made a big contribution – it's another leap in the film's originality and has enhanced the film's moods and this sense I wanted of eerie, other-worldliness"

Fortunately for Robert, his approach coincided with a new band project that Steven was working on with his new songwriting partner, Arban. As DARLING HATE they have provided him with 4 songs for the movie including the opening and closing tracks.

"I'm delighted with what they've done - the marriage of Arban's haunting voice and Steven's menacing music adds a really strong dimension to the film. I think the opening track deserves to be a hit single".

Back to the Future

Research for London Voodoo first began by searching the Internet and by reading whatever books were available on voodoo and the history of West Africa.

"I soon discovered that voodoo followers felt very aggrieved at how films have portrayed their beliefs as evil or demonic. I decided that this film was going to show these people some respect".

Robert and Helen managed to indulge their passion for travel with their desire to research voodoo first-hand by spending time in Cuba, Miami and New Orleans and discovering how people there incorporated this faith into their everyday lives.

"What interested me about Voodoo is that there's no heaven or hell – just different planes of afterlife existence. They might be right because one could argue that heaven and hell are concepts based on judgments of right and wrong which actually change in definition across cultures, geography and time".

Ultimately, the religion shown in the film is closer to the practices of Santeria than voodoo but this is part of what makes the film authentic and believable for contemporary British audiences.

"I'd like to think that the film has depth and many layers – not only in terms of the voodoo but also the themes of balancing work and family life and making sacrifices for loved ones".

Coming soon...

Based on the research and background work for London Voodoo, Robert has treatments for two prequels.

"I've been careful not to include anything in this film that isn't backwards compatible! It's going to be exciting to develop and deliver a voodoo trilogy."

So when is the next voodoo instalment?

"Well it all depends on the success of this film. Right now I'm playing safe and developing a near-future sci-fi thriller that I'm confident we could again raise the money for privately. However, if London Voodoo gets picked up by a major then they might give me enough to make *Voodoo 1902*. We'll have to wait and see...."

And finally... The "Making of" Documentary

The job of documenting the making of London Voodoo was given to award-winning documentary-maker and director, Daneeta Loretta Saft.

From the outset, Daneeta was keen to create an hour-long "making of.." that was more than just marketing puff for the DVD. With exclusive access to all areas of the production, she compiled more than 60 hours of footage over a three month period that encompassed pre-production through to early post-production. Also available for her use was the director's year-long video diary that charted the highs and lows of the script development process.

The resulting documentary is a detailed behind-the-scenes look at how the film was made and an intimate portrait of a determined director and a lively, dedicated team working together to make London Voodoo a success.

Cast Biographies

Doug Cockle (Lincoln)

"When I read the script a lot of it rang true for me - I really had to have a good look at myself".

Doug approached the subject of voodoo with caution - not wanting to research too heavily in order to leave Lincoln vulnerable. "The surprises that happen in the film would be surprises for me as well as Lincoln."

Doug is great as Lincoln Mathers and adds this lead role to his long list of film appearances. His other film and TV work includes *Reign of Fire*, *The Spy Game* and *The Tailor of Panama*, *The Second Coming* (ITV) and *Band of Brothers* (HBO).

"Lincoln is a 12-hours-in-the-office kinda guy, thrown into extraordinary circumstances".

Sara Stewart (Sarah)

"It's a cracking role, there are not many of roles around for women that are this challenging".

Sara uses parallels between herself and the character. "She's very close to her father, her mother died recently and was mentally ill, just as mine was....Sarah is plagued with the fear of becoming mentally ill, which I can understand".

Sara's first feature role was as Princess Alexandra in multi-award winning film *Mrs Brown* (two Oscar nominations, two BAFTA awards, one Golden Globe) back in 1996. Since then she has several TV credits including *NCS Manhunt* (BBC) & *Inspector Rebus* (STV) and acted on stage opposite Gwyneth Paltrow at the Donmar Warehouse in *Proof*.

Sven-Bertil Taube (Lars)

"The script blends the spiritual life with the function of the business, family and wife, and then something very strange hits them. I find that fascinating....it plays with these magical landscapes in a very bright and interesting way."

Sven-Bertil is a household name in Scandinavia with a career spanning fifty or so years. He has appeared many films in his homeland, Sweden, and of course international hits such as *The Eagle has Landed* and *Puppet on a Chain*.

Sven-Bertil was winner of the Guldbagge award for best actor in 1995 for the film *Handerna*, and won a nomination for best actor two years later at the same awards for the film *Jerusalem* in which he co-starred with his London Voodoo colleague Michael Nyqvist.

Sven-Bertil plays Lars, a Swedish Chief Executive: "He's an elderly statesman, one of those guys that have hung around too long - experienced but no so hungry anymore".

Michael Nyqvist (Magnus)

"I was curious about what would happen, I had to keep turning the pages and try not to look at the end".

Michael plays Magnus, a successful Swedish executive: "He looks more to the fact of can he trust his person, can he trust this man, who is the man behind what he is being shown?"

Michael was very happy to have been asked to appear in London Voodoo and described they script as "intelligently written" and "a very English script, which I like a lot".

Michael won the best actor award in the Gijon Film Festival in 2000 for his portrayal of Rolf in Lukas Moodyson's *Together* and received Sweden's Guldbagge award in 2002 for best actor in the film [Grabben i graven bredvid](#). He was also recently voted Sweden's sexiest man!

Vonda Barnes (Kelly)

“As soon as I read the script I couldn’t put it down”.

“I think I do everything *but* help” explains Vonda when asked about Kelly’s relationship with Sarah, “it’s good to play someone who’s vindictive!”

Previously with successful, chart-topping girl group *Madasun* she sang at the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

Since then Vonda has worked as a TV presenter and a model.

London Voodoo is Vonda’s first acting role.

Trisha Mortimer (Fiona)

“She never really adjusted to the loss of her husband, she blocked out the world”.

Trisha has had extensive experience in stage, TV and film in both the UK and the US. After touring around the Eastern Seaboard of America with several stage companies, Trisha decided to concentrate more on film based roles, with appearances in *Frightmare* and *Schizo* as well as *Hindsight is a Marvellous Thing* and *Diary Dates*.

Having worked previously with the director on his first short film, she says of Robert “he’s a pleasure to work for, always reassuring the cast members but still keeping focused on the task at hand”.

David Webber (Ray)

David used his childhood experiences to prepare him for the film “My family background is Jamaican. We call Voodoo ‘obia’ - it’s not quite the same but has a lot of similarities and is something I’ve grown up with a very healthy respect for”.

After beginning his career on the stage with the Royal National Theatre, David moved into several TV and film roles including *The Knock*, *Prime Suspect V*, *The Avengers*, *Among Giants* and *51st State*.

Jacqueline Boatswain (Ruth)

With a background of starring in hit West End musicals (“Cats”, “A Chorus Line”, “Chicago”) Jacqueline’s career has moved towards TV and film.

She has appeared in several popular British TV programmes including *Grange Hill*, *The Bill*, *Casualty* and *Eastenders*.

Crew Biographies

Robert Pratten (Director/Writer/Producer)

Robert Pratten left school at 16 years old and started his working life as an apprentice with The Ford Motor Company in Essex. At 20 years old, Ford sponsored him to Salford University where he met his wife.

Robert decided to leave his successful career as a leading telecoms consultant in June 2000 to take a new direction, enrolling at the London Film School.

Since then Robert has directed seven short films and worked in various other film crew roles including cinematographer, boom swinger and even actor. Now aged 37, London Voodoo is his debut feature film.

He has an engineering honours degree in microelectronics and a postgraduate diploma in marketing.

Helen Pratten (Executive Producer)

Helen Pratten started working life as a sewing machinist. She studied A-levels at evening class and self-financed herself through University where she met her husband.

Helen is a partner at a "big four" chartered accountancy firm working in the private equity group.

In preparation for London Voodoo, Helen worked on Robert's short films in various crew roles from clapper loader to runner.

She has a first class honours degree in economics, a professional chartered accountancy qualification and an MBA from Manchester Business School.

Steven Severin (Composer)

Steven Severin is bass player and songwriter with legendary group Siouxsie & The Banshees. The Banshees were formed in 1977 and helped shape and define punk. They are also often accredited with giving birth to Goth music.

Steven is a critically-acclaimed solo artist with four albums to his name (Visions of Ecstasy, Maldoror, The Woman in the Dunes and Unisexdreamsalon).

He has his own record label, RE:records.

Patrick Jackson (Cinematographer)

Patrick Jackson was born in Sweden in 1979. He later graduated from Sweden's Documentary Film School and attended the Stockholm Film School before coming to England in June 2000 to complete his studies at the London Film School. It was here that Patrick met Robert.

Patrick has directed more than 10 fiction and documentary short films and has worked as Director of Photography on over 20 shorts. London Voodoo is his first feature.

He is currently writing a feature-length screenplay and shooting a documentary that intermittently takes him to Japan.

The History of Zen Films

The (Lotus) Seed of Zen Films

Helen & Robert's company, Zen Films, was established in 2000 – soon after Robert had given up work as a marketing consultant in the telecoms industry.

“It was at the height of the Internet boom that I decided to quit work and go to film school” he explains. “Most people thought I was nuts! I had a great job travelling the world but when you spend hour after hour in airline lounges, taxis and hotels you get a lot of time to reflect on life”.

Robert was inspired by the London Film Festival in November 1999 and made a five-year plan to become a film director. The first two years would be spent attending the London Film School in Covent Garden – just a stone's throw from where he had been working – a year writing the script, a year making the film and a year promoting it.

“It was a case of deciding to change my goals and choose a different path in life. It was very scary but was made easier with the support of my friends and Helen”.

Why Zen?

“The company is called Zen Films because “Zen” is about experiencing the present - the moment that's right now. Many people find themselves either racing through today on the promise of a better tomorrow – as I was - or shackled to yesterday.

“We want to make films with popular appeal that are entertaining, thought-provoking and irreverent: films that people talk about after they leave the cinema - films that might actually prompt someone to question their habits and opinions. For now, that means genre & high concept films that deliver their message by forcing people to the edge of their belief systems and asking if this is really where they want to be.

Credits

Robert Pratten Director & Writer
Patrick Jackson Cinematographer
Ryan Chandler Sound Recordist
Matthew Jessee Editor
Fiona O'Connor Costume Designer
Michelle Watson Hair & Make-up Designer
Steven Severin Composer
Kasper Cornish Choreographer

Cast

Doug Cockle Lincoln Mathers
Sara Stewart Sarah Mathers
Grace Sprott Beth Mathers
Vonda Barnes Kelly
Trisha Mortimer Fiona
Sven-Bertil Taube Lars
Michael Nyqvist Magnus
Jacqueline Boatswain Ruth
David Webber Ray
Roy Borrett Jeff
Dickon Tolson Lee
Basil King Boom
Steve O'Halloran Roger (Lincoln's boss)
Carmen Abela Sue (Lincoln's secretary)
Kevin Stone Realtor (estate agent)
Tony Edridge American businessman
Tony Freeman McAlister
Claire Belhassine 2nd Secretary
Noel Keoghan Lincoln's colleague

Camera & Lighting Dept.

Patrick Jackson Cinematographer
Karl Hui Focus Puller
Anna Carrington Clapper Loader
Najaf Bilgrami Key Gaffer
Graham Clayton-Chance Grip & Gaffer
Ben Wisdom Camera Dept. Runner

Sound Dept.

Ryan Chandler Sound Recordist
John Burns Boom Operator

Art Department

Rebecca Pilkington Supervising Art Director
Joanna Pratt Art Director
Aya Fujii Art Director
Daniela Faggio Art Director
Sarah Whittle Assistant Art Director
Yun-Jung Ko Assistant Art Director
Christophe Spurling Assistant Art Director
Erika Okvist Prosthetic corpses

Production

Helen Pratten Executive Producer
Robert Pratten Producer
Ben Siegle Line Producer
Ben Scriven 1st Assistant Director
Ed Siegle 2nd Assistant Director

Gavin Sorohan Production Supervisor
James Hobson Post Production Supervisor
Vanessa Bolton Production Planner
James Hobson Runner
Jimmy Odell Runner
Ed Rodrigues Runner

Laure Bregevin Script Supervisor
Jeremy Larkin Stills Photographer
Daneeta Loretta Saft Documentary Maker

Assistants

Sarah Tapscott Costume Assistant
Colette Keoghan Production Assistant
Jeremy Clarke Location Assistant
Neil James Art dept. assistance

Additional Support for Location Scenes

Helen Slaymaker Costume Assistant
Danielle Bendick Make-up Assistant
Stacey Kutzak Make-up Assistant
Anthony Tarr Gaffer
Johnny Horsfall Runner
Chris Gamm Runner

Stunts & Special Effects

Peter Brayham Stunt co-ordinator
Dani Biernat Fiona's stunt double
Tony Lucken Stunt driver
Bob Smoke Special effects

Set Construction

Kasey Coory Construction
Richard Sommerlad Construction
David Gray Painter

Voodoo Followers

Pamela Hall Canelle Hoppé
Bambi Nikki Brown
Patricia Jones Denise Mack
Joyce McKenzie Anne-Marie Olufuwa
Amy Rockson Patricia Scott-Cumming
Jackie Stirling Ulrike White
Denise Worme

Voodoo Drummers

Delroy Brown Valentine Hanson
Justin Joseph

New York Hotel Players

David Kinchlea Man in lift
Matthew Jessee Drunk colleague
Daneeta Loretta Saft Porter

Prospect Lane Players

Alan Pratten	Man in street
Harry Pratten	Boy 1 in Street
Charlie Pratten	Boy 2 in Street
Anthony Cooper	Paperboy
Steve Taylor	Removals Man 1
Barry Slattery	Removals Man 2
Jon Roberts	Taxi Driver 1
John Hudson	Taxi Driver 2

Indian Restaurant Players

Noel Keoghan	Man 1
Jon Curl	Man 2

Additional Blackheath Players

Adam Hagberg	Policeman
Miranda Cook	Police woman
Ron Scriven	CID officer
Ed Siegle	CID officer
Mark Brown	Ambulance Man 1
A Tooke	Ambulance Man 2

Office Players

Tom Allen	R Baxter
Mark Bolton	Vanessa Bolton
Andrew Brown	Jon Curl
Catriona Dowse	J Firth
Cecilia Good	M Greenway
Matt Harris	Laura Henderson
Clive Hillier	J Hudson
Chris Jepps	Noel Keoghan
Colette Keoghan	Nicola Kerr
Tim Kerry	Robert Manning
Steve Melhuish	Danny Olliver
Mats Olsson	Annoula Peppas
Doug Ponsford	James Stamp
T Valder	Conor Whelan
John Womersley	M Womersley

Photographic Players

Jonathan & Linda Siegle	Mr & Mrs Mathers Sr.
Arthur Ankrah	Fiona's dead husband
Alan & Sarah Pratten	Kelly's parents
Joy Brown	backpacking friend
Helen Pratten	backpacking friend

Support Services & Advisers

Stuart Lewin	Poster & logo design
Elaine Gamm	Payroll Co-ordinator
Charles Russell Solicitors	Legal Services
Heath Lambert Group	Insurance
The Clearing House	Film clearances
AAA Catering	Location catering
Emergency Enterprises	Ambulance at Blackheath
Taxi services	Metropolitan International CTS Cabs

Equipment

Camera & Grip	Ice Film
Lighting	Direct Lighting
Sound	The Cruet Company
Rigging	LGH Ltd
Neg Processing	Bucks Labs
Telecine	The Television Set

Living Room Art

Lucy Marks	Shaun McDowell
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Thanks to

Lucy Siegle	Dave Doherty
Jayne Deeley	David & Jo Kinchlea
Abby Cook	Gary Bettesworth
Kal Siddique	Lisa McKibben
Harry Rushton	Hugh Newsam
Steven Segal	Richard Verney
Paul Mackenzie	Ross Heaven
Canary Wharf Group plc.	
Blair	
David Yeo at The Television Set	
Martin Carr at Destiny Films	

Mr Kahn at The Sitar Indian Restaurant

The film units of the London boroughs of Southwark,
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Filmed at 3 Mills Studios and various locations in London.

See www.londonvoodoo.com for the latest news and downloads.

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live life: enjoy the journey

What is Voodoo?

Voodoo:

- is a religion that some have estimated is worshiped by around 60 million people worldwide
- has its origins in West Africa but is most often associated with Haiti where it is the country's official religion. Voodoo developed in Haiti around the 1750s. (Historical note: the European slave trade was at its worst during the period 1650-1900 when Africans were shipped from West Africa to North & South America and the West Indies.)
- is predominantly concerned with curing people from illness (this is the Rada variety) but is most often shown in movies as "black magic" - an evil manipulating and cursing force (this is the Petro variety).
- is *not* Santeria (the worship of saints) which is another religion originated in West Africa and is most prevalent in Cuba and Miami. The religion shown in London Voodoo is a mix of voodoo and Santeria. Given that there is no written spiritual text or central "voodoo authority", nobody can say if the practices in our film are wholly fact or fiction but they are certainly based on fact.

Primary voodoo concepts:

- there is one God and no devil
- there is no heaven or hell. Spirits representing various facets of our lives and the spirits of dead relatives influence all life on Earth and hence must be looked after by voodoo followers
- possession is a mechanism for spirits to communicate with the living. At ceremonies, drumming and dancing help achieve the altered state of consciousness for spirits to take hold of a body. Each spirit has its own rhythm.

See *Further Reading* at the back of this document for more information.

Voodoo Interview with Director

21st Century Voodoo

Set a film in Haiti or New Orleans, and there's bound to be at least one reference to Voodoo. Make it a horror film, and you'll likely see at least one scene of half-naked people possessed, sacrificing chickens and turning into zombies. But Voodoo in London? That's a whole new bag. Demonized in film since the 1930s, Voodoo is getting a fair shake in the new supernatural thriller *London Voodoo* written and directed by Robert Pratten and produced by Zen Films.

Why Voodoo? "What attracted me to Voodoo is that there's no concept of heaven and hell. It's likely that *London Voodoo* is the first feature to give Voodoo proper respect," says Pratten who thoroughly researched the subject even travelling to Miami, New Orleans, Cuba and Brazil to learn about the religion first hand. "We're inverting people's perception of what's right and wrong...good and evil."

So, what's good and what's evil? There's at least two possessions, a Voodoo initiation, an exorcism. "Work is the real evil in the film" says Pratten. "We're working ourselves senseless. We're so caught up in deadlines and proposals and office politics that, by the time we get home, we're too exhausted to notice what's going on with our families. Our whole lives fly by."

But, what about the Voodoo stuff? No sacrifices? No demons? No blood? "The film is set in contemporary London, so we're putting our own interpretation on Voodoo & Santeria. Even though the film gets pretty scary and supernatural, I wanted the voodoo to remain completely believable. I wanted people to think that this is the sort of thing the girl next door might be into. After the Muti killings we've had in London over the past few years, a voodoo film in London was overdue but I didn't want to follow all the clichés and denigrate a religion that's followed by 60 million or so people worldwide! I think we've got a beautiful, eerie, gripping thriller" So what happens to the hero in *London Voodoo*? "Voodoo helps our central character gain some perspective. He's a modern guy, he doesn't follow any religion - except possibly the cult of pride and greed - and then one day his situation deteriorates to the point where the Vodoussaint are the only people to whom he can turn for help."

Any last words? "Although the title says it, the film is not really *about* Voodoo, per say. It's about people making sacrifices for love".

Further Reading

Voodoo, Santeria and Amazons of Dahomey

- Voodoo – Search for the Spirit (Harry N. Abrams) ISBN 1584728574
- Voodoo Charms and Talismans (Robert Pelton) published by Original Publications; ISBN 0942272501
- Saneria The Religion (Migene Gonzalez-Wippler) published by Llewellyn Publications; ISBN 1567183298
- Warrior Women – The Amazons of Dahomey and the Nature of War (Robert B. Edgerton) published by Westview Press; ASIN 0813337119
- Amazons of Black Sparta (Stanley B. Alpern) published by C Hurst & Co Ltd; ISBN 1850653623

Voodoo Internet Resources

- Possibly the best www.members.aol.com/racine125/index1.html
- More voodoo from Haiti www.webster.edu/~corbetre/haiti/voodoo/voodoo.htm
- Voodoo in the UK groups.yahoo.com/group/vodou_uk/

Zen and Zen Buddhism

- An Introduction To Zen www.ks.essortment.com/intoductionzen-riej.htm
- Understanding Zen Koans www.mtmt.essortment.com/zenkoanspiritu_rlmp.htm
- About Buddhism www.geocities.com/Tokyo/5215/dharma.html

Books to read if planning to give up work

- Reality Hacking - unusual ideas and provocations for reinventing your work (Nicola Phillips) published by Capstone; ISBN 1-900961-10-5
- Synchronicity -the inner path of leadership (Joseph Jaworski) published by McGraw Hill; ISBN 1-57675-031-0
- Advanced Selling Strategies (Brian Tracy) published by Simon and Schuster; ISBN