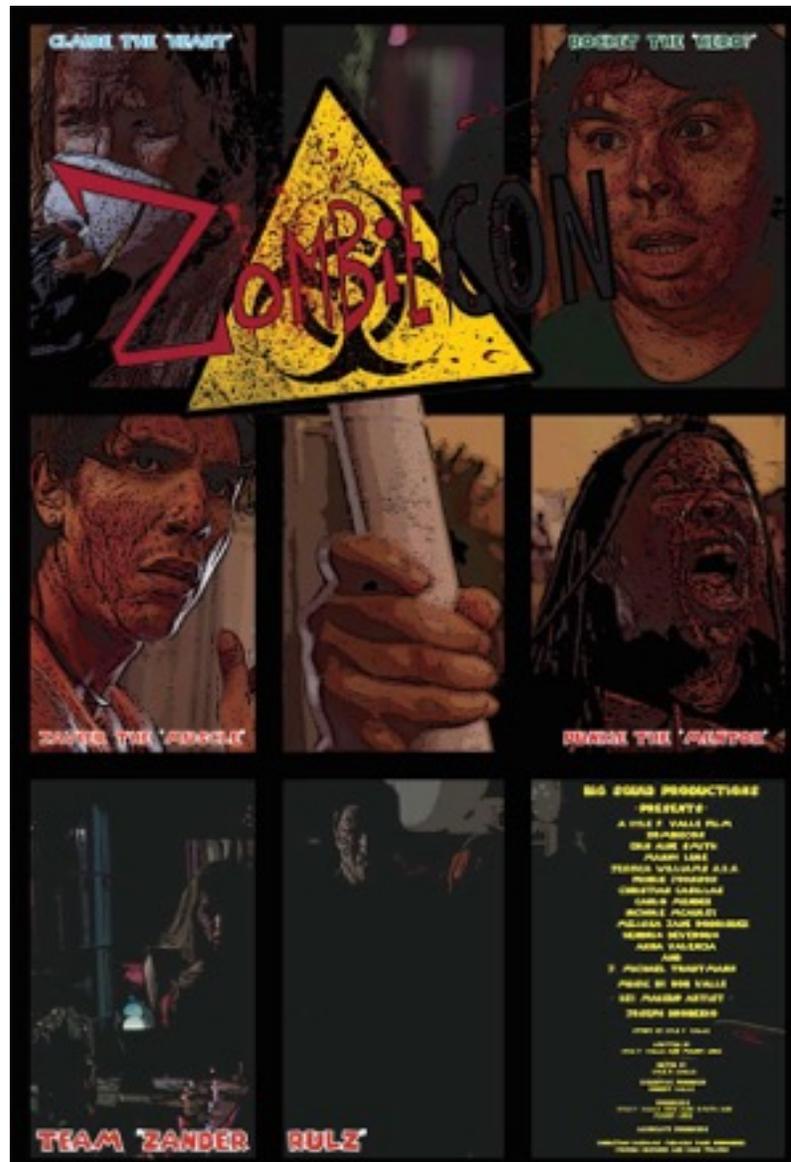


PRESS NOTES



Press/inquiries: erin@bigsquidproductions.com

More information: zombieconmovie.org

Facebook: [Facebook.com/zombieconmovie](https://www.facebook.com/zombieconmovie)

Twitter & Instagram: [@zombieconmovie](https://www.instagram.com/zombieconmovie)

TRT: 106 minutes / Language: English / Country: USA

LOGLINE:

A cosplaying group of best friends must traverse a crumbling Los Angeles overrun with the apocalyptic undead in order to save who? Mom.

SHORT SYNOPSIS:

Suffocating under the daily oppression of Los Angeles assholes and closed-minded society, it's a battle for the cosplaying group of best friends 'the Rocket's Rockets' just to do what they love.

Squaring off at a regional comic con's competition against former best friend now arch rival Zander (and his new team), only one group can win the gold. Unbeknownst to both groups, the real war is about to begin.

Team rivalries and assholes become child's play when a fated encounter changes the course of human existence forever — an oddball mystic and the gift of a mysterious rock set in motion a zombie apocalypse of anime proportions, with events that will forever change Rocket and the Rocket's Rockets...

Will the Rocket's Rockets be able to traverse a crumbling LA overrun with undead assholes and save Mom?

An anime-inspired action-adventure that explores the battle between good and evil within oneself, *ZombieCON* is a roller coaster of emotions and a testament to the power of friendship and heart.

LONG SYNOPSIS:

Rocket, the hotheaded leader of LA-based cosplay group “the Rocket’s Rockets”, struggles to remain a good person against the constant onslaught of oppressive assholes and closed-minded society.

Rockets’ teammates are family, each one is a pillar of strength in his life — Punkie, the mentor. Claire, the heart. Javier, the muscle. Without the Rocket’s Rockets and his eccentric Mother, Rocket wouldn’t be able to keep going in a world that berates him for simply doing what he loves.

The biggest jerk in his life is Zander, a former cosplay teammate, now arch rival, who formed his own cosplay team called Zander Rulz. Squaring off against Rocket and the Rocket’s Rockets at a local comic con, Zander takes every chance to berate, insult and provoke.

Although the Rocket’s Rockets clench the top prize, their victory is short lived. A series of altercations with jerks downtown leaves their prized trophy smashed and Rocket beaten and battered, followed up by a mystical homeless man gifting Claire a mysterious Rock.

Unbeknownst to the Rocket’s Rockets and their rivals, the real war is about to begin as the emergence of this fated magical rock will forever change the course of humanity.

When Claire makes a wish that all the assholes of LA would turn into zombies, the rock miraculously (horrifically) grants it. Instantly, the city is teeming with asshole zombies.

After having to defend their home from the now-turned assholes, the Rocket’s Rockets, battered and bruised, find out that Zander has infiltrated his mother’s home — the Rocket’s Rockets must make a life-altering choice. Forgoing the safety of their apartment, they head out in full cosplay armor to cross the crumbling city overrun with apocalyptic undead and save the one they love: Mama Bear.

Can the love and determination of the Rocket’s Rockets triumph over this Hell? Can a person really ever be sure that their good outweighs their evil? Will assholes destroy this world?

An anime-inspired action adventure, *ZombieCON* explores the transformative power of friendship, personal choice, love and the battle between the good and evil within oneself.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Born of my lifelong obsession of cinema, anime, characters and stories, *ZombieCON* is my response to the world's unfolding events around us; Not bound to any specific politician, movement or mouthpiece of the day but rather to our own empathy and kindness to one another.

FAQ

Q: How is *ZombieCON* a true auteur film?

A: Kyle Fritz Valle: Creator, Lead Writer, Director, Cinematographer, Set Designer, Costume Designer, Special Effects Creator, Production Supervisor, Acting Coach, Editor, VFX Supervisor, Sound Designer, etc...There was not one aspect of this film which was not handcrafted and curated by Kyle Fritz Valle, making *ZombieCON* a true auteur film.

Q: Do the assholes who take over the world in *ZombieCON* have any bearing on current times?

A: Assholes existed before us and will exist long after we are all in the grave. The world of *ZombieCON* just heightens the contrast by enhancing both the physical and psychological aspects of their personalities; in this way *ZombieCON*'s, "zombie assholes" are the same as those in the world today, just on steroids. Closed-minded, short-sighted, self-obsessed and uncultured, an asshole is one who refuses to entertain or engage in meaningful debate, or those who choose to bury their heads and follow the leader as opposed to braving life as an individual who dares to think for themselves. So yes, the assholes in the world of *ZombieCON* do have bearing on current times as they serve to highlight the crazed and animal-like nature which seems to be infecting people all around the globe.

Q: How is *ZombieCON* a revolution in independent filmmaking?

A: With the feature film budget well under \$1 million and the number of on-set crew ranging from seven people to sometimes just one (the Director, who was operating the camera with the follow focus duct taped to his arm); *ZombieCON*, is proof of concept concerning what is possible with today's technology and access. The Big Squid filmmaking team had previously only produced short films and several web series; this is a first time feature film for the director, producer, and starring actor - who are each at or under the age of 30. To capture the scope of this story and bring it to life took grit, determination and a ton of heart — with no big studio backing and limited budget and equipment at every stage.

Q: What was the fundraising campaign like?

A: Though the IndieGogo campaign that sought to raise \$60,000 failed to reach its goal, the content created and the exposure proved useful later in production and post — our team had put together many cosplay photoshoots that would later be hung on the walls as props, character bios and cast interviews; Director Kyle Fritz Valle designed and handcrafted EVA foam armor for the Rocket's Rocket's' cosplay, and was ready to give

away as donation prizes dozens of his and his father's own vintage collectible toys. The fundraising campaign proved to be just another obstacle to overcome, as the film secured private financing shortly afterwards and shooting began just one month later.

Q: What was the casting process like for *ZombieCON*?

A: The Rocket's Rockets and Zander Rulz characters were written for and around key members of the Big Squid Productions family, actors who we are very close friends with and had worked with many times. Rocket's Rockets worked privately and in group rehearsals set up and led by Director Kyle Fritz Valle, immersing themselves in anime, mangas and cosplay life. Professional casting auditions were held in Los Angeles (by a first time feature film casting director, producer and lead actress, Erin Áine) to cast most of the roles, and filled in the gaps from there. The most interesting casting was that of the cosplayers attending the film's con - a half dozen local Los Angeles cosplayers were cast to appear at the con sporting their own handmade cosplay, bringing the scene even more authenticity. It was an amazing, well rounded and bonded cast.

Q: How were locations essential to the film?

A: We shot all across Los Angeles, in rented as well as owned locations, from filming at one of our lead's parents' house in Downey ('Big Mama's House'), to a rooftop overlooking Downtown LA, to a woodsy ranch in Santa Clarita, to transforming the filmmaking fiances' home apartment into a live set which also housed 4-5 crew members, and served as a base for all of production. Special Effects Makeup Artist Joseph Drobezko slept on the same couch he was spraying down with blood and zombie guts by day; the boom operator's sleeping quarters doubled as the actors' changing room area by day, filled to the brim with props and equipment; all while the apartment was a live set - as the (very bloody) Rocket's Rockets home. It was a whirlwind of activity that made the cast and crew extremely close.

Q: *ZombieCON* has been touring comic cons?!

A: We've had tremendous participation from our cast and crew while exhibiting at around half a dozen comic cons. This has allowed us to introduce the concept of *ZombieCON*, complete with trailers, props, materials, manga art and cast mates speaking with con-goers, to many Southern California comic cons. We've been fortunate to meet so many artists and cosplayers who have now joined the active *ZombieCON* community on social media. We've filmed numerous cosplay videos at events and cons, from the grand San Diego Comic Con, to local grassroots cosplay events. The con community is AMAZING.

Q: Is a Manga version of the story available?!

A: *ZombieCON* Director/Creator Kyle Fritz Valle adapted the first 20 minutes of the film into a manga format, so fans can get to know the story and characters before the film debuts. Eventually the entire film will be adapted, to coincide with its release. As with any good anime story, there's got to be a riveting origin manga!

Q: What was the editing process like with such a small team?

A: The post production journey occurred in the same studio apartment used as production home base ("the Rocket's Rockets apartment"). Much of the film's set decor still adorns the walls, with additions from con exhibitions, cosplay events, artwork and sketches for the film... Creator/Director Kyle Fritz Valle completed around 95% of all post production work, from editing to color correcting to audio engineering... even creating the original anime sequences and commercials shown on the television in *ZombieCON*. His fiancé, *ZombieCON* Producer and leading actress ("Claire") Erin Áine, handled all marketing and social media. Producer and leading man ("Rocket") Manny Luke completed the film's visual effects work. That's pretty much it, other than the original music and composing completed by Rob Valle and audio engineering work by Tommy Figueroa. These five crew members comprised our very small but very effective team.

Q: What do you hope viewers will take away from the film?

A: HEART and determination. From having the drive to dream of a feature film and making it happen regardless of the odds, to sticking up for what and who you believe in, follow your passions without regard for outside criticism. There are many parallels between the finished film and its process of creation. Never give up, be true to yourself, to your family and to your community. Speak out about injustice, don't fade into the background — the world needs more bright streaks of light, and less invisible, faceless shadows.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

KYLE FRITZ VALLE - CREATOR; DIRECTOR; CO-WRITER; EDITOR; PRODUCER; COLORIST; SOUND DESIGNER, etc.



Filmmaker and avid storyteller Kyle F. Valle hails from New Jersey, where he excelled in sports as football Captain of his high school team. Kyle turned down many offers to play at the collegiate level, choosing instead to experience another part of the country, graduating from The University of South Carolina. Between writing scripts and co-founding the local Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity chapter, Kyle was ready to take another large step off the beaten path and moved to Los Angeles to begin his film career. After booking several roles in TV and film and graduating from Ivana Chubbuck Studio, Kyle began writing, directing and producing short films alongside his then girlfriend, now fiancé, Erin Áine. Within a year and half, they had produced 6 short films which were accepted into, and nominated for, awards in several festivals. In 2015, Kyle officially incorporated his production company, Big Squid Productions, and launched streaming site MewNowTV.com, both of which he serves as owner operator. MewNowTv launched with 9 original series, all but one of which were written, directed, produced, and edited by Kyle. Alongside film festival acceptances and awards, Kyle received critical acclaim and acting nominations for his starring role in the indie thriller No More Chances. He also starred in upcoming feature Hart Blvd (acting alongside Q'orianka Kilcher, Raymond J. Barry and Sean Young). Following his many roles in the creation of *ZombieCON*, from story conception, to directing to editing, animation, and even wardrobe design, Kyle has also been hired as Director for several pilot projects.

Keep an eye on this 'One Man Production Studio', he does it all.

ERIN ÁINE - PRODUCER; CO-WRITER; CASTING DIRECTOR; "CLAIRE"



Erin Áine has been a working Film and TV actress for over a decade. At the age of 4, she began performing in school plays and musicals, signing with a theatrical agent at 11. Erin built a thriving acting career in Atlanta, booking roles in *Bobby Jones*, *A Stroke of Genius*, indie darlings *Dance of the Dead* and *The Fat Boy Chronicles*, NBC's *Field of Vision*, and worked as a host in Guatemala for travel series *WayFinder*, all before graduating from Vanderbilt University. During college, she self-taped from her dorm room, booking co-star and lead roles in shows and films including *The Vampire Diaries*, *Revolution*, *Quarantine 2: Terminal*, and Tom Holland's *Twisted Tales*, etc. Since relocating to Los Angeles, Erin co-founded production company Big Squid Productions and streaming platform MewNowTV.com with fiancé Kyle F. Valle, and has produced, casted, and worked as 1st and 2nd Director (while occasionally starring in) over a dozen short films and series.

**MANNY LUKE - PRODUCER; CO-WRITER; LEAD VISUAL EFFECTS ARTIST;
"ROCKET"**



Manny earned his BFA in creative writing at Full Sail University, where he produced a number of micro-budget festival-accepted short film and a number of films fro his YouTube channel, 'Homewrecker Films'. before moving to Los Angeles. Working full time at Big Squid Productions, he honed his skills to new levels. Producing, writing, acting, editing, VFX, Manny has built quite a resume! His starring role in *ZombieCON* is actually his first feature film role. Apart from *Manny's World of Color* on MewNowTV. He had never acted before on a professional set. His performance as Rocket is a testament to his hard work, natural talent, and the special relationship between himself and Kyle Fritz Valle, who guided him while preparing for and performing his role of Rocket.

JOSEPH DROBEZKO - KEY MAKEUP; "PARK ZOMBIE"



Since graduating from the Make-up Designory in NYC, Joseph has worked as a key makeup and special effects artist in all forms of media, from film to commercial, print, and special events. In 2017 Joseph competed on SyFy's FaceOff: Divide and Conquer (Season 12) and is currently a special guest instructor at OA Makeup School for Special Effects in Guangzhou, China.

ABOUT THE CAST

Punkie Johnson - "*PUNKIE*"



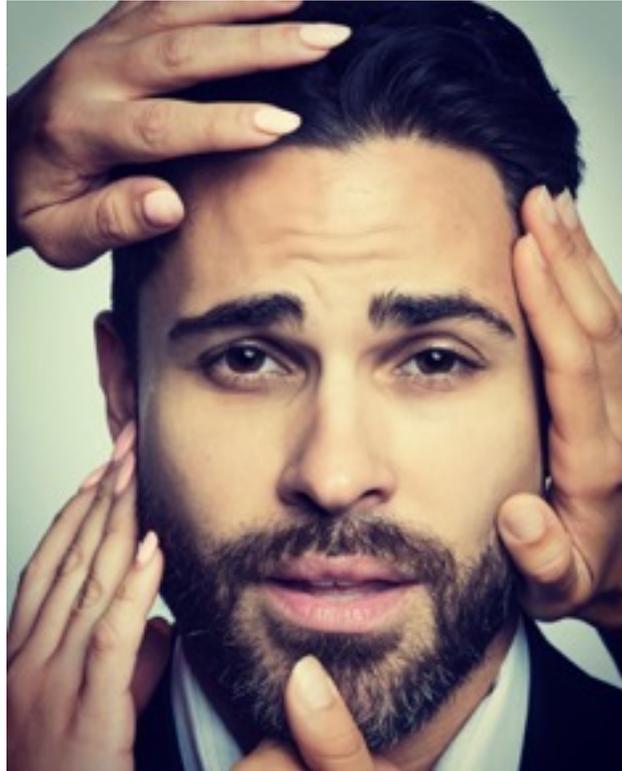
Punkie is a Paid Regular stand-up comedian at the World Famous Comedy Store on Sunset Blvd., and a talented actress, writer and producer. She received the honor of having her name added to the Comedy Store wall in December 2016. Punkie has starred in several short films, talk shows & web series, including her own popular series *Talkin' Points* on MewNowTV.com, and another for Comedy Central. Recently Punkie has been writing content for Comedy Central and will star in an upcoming series for FaceBook.

Christian Casillas - "JAVIER"; Associate Producer



MSA Fit Model, Christian Casillas of PERFIT Body and formerly FBE (West Hollywood's Firm Body Evolution) is a talented actor, celebrity fitness trainer, and producer. Most recently, Christian has hosted and/or starred in weight loss series *Tune Up!*, spanish entertainment series *Tremen2*, thrillers *Journeyman*, *Stakeout*, *Mirage*, comedy series *Jobless*, and recently broken into the telenovela world; all while guest hosting and modeling on a number of entertainment programs.

Carlo Mendez - "ZANDER"



Carlo Mendez was born in Los Angeles and raised in Miami to Cuban parents. Carlo has been working steadily over the last two decades as a successful TV, film, and commercial actor, with appearances on shows like *Parks and Recreation* where he played "Eduardo" and the CW series *90210*. Carlo has kept busy with dozens of roles in movies; to name just a few: *Opious*, *Straight on 'til Morning*, *Beautiful Wave*, *Disrupt/Dismantle*, *Diary of a Single Mom*, *Beneath the Leaves*, and *Frank and Ava*, as well as shorts like MewNowTV's thriller *Stakeout*. Currently he plays the hilarious recurring character 'Rico' in Rob Schneider's comedy series *Real Rob* on Netflix.

Nichole McAuley - "MAMA BEAR"



Born in Atlanta, Nichole began participating in competitions at age 8. At ten years old she was selected to be featured on a 60 Minutes story about beauty competitions and talent searches. After moving to Los Angeles, Nichole began modeling. She then began appearing in commercials, then T.V. shows and eventually movies, with roles in *The Nutty Professor*, *Beverly Hills Cop III*, and *Kiss the Girls*, to name a few. A talented singer, dancer and writer, she even wrote a line of original comic books. While working on *Star Trek Voyager* (26 episodes) as 7of 9's photo and body double, A Star Fleet member, Borge and Holograms, Nichole became inspired to learn about Hair and Make Up and has since built another thriving career as a film/TV/print/celebrity Hair and Makeup artist. She is frequently invited to sign autographs at cons and was a 2017 Celebrity Guest at the Official Star Trek Convention.

J. Michael Trautmann - "MYSTIC MAN"



A successful film and television actor, J. Michael was born in Milwaukee, WI and raised in Minneapolis, MN, where he earned praise for his leading roles in high school theater. He then attended the University of Arizona and was accepted as a BFA actor in the prestigious Arizona Repertory Theatre where he notably played Eugene Jerome in the Neil Simon Trilogy of 'Brighton Beach Memoirs', 'Biloxi Blues' and 'Broadway Bound'. He was seen performing in an Improv Comedy Troupe the next year and was asked to audition for his first film 'Earnie'. Notable roles on screen include 'Kevin' in *96 Minutes*, recurring character 'Iggy Milkovich' in *Shameless* on Showtime, *Longmire*, *Here Comes the Boom*, *Criminal Minds*, *NCIS: Los Angeles* etc. J. Michael is also a longtime cosplayer and avid anime fan who frequents SoCal comic cons whenever he isn't working.

Melissa Jane Rodriguez - "RAY"; Associate Producer



Since majoring in theatre at San Diego State University and studying drama and physical theatre in Canterbury, England, Melissa's acting career has included credits in *The Amazing Spider-Man* (2012), the multiple award winning film *Lil Tokyo Reporter* (2012), *Days of Our Lives* (2014), and an award winning performance as lead actress in *Dyed* (2014). In 2013 she won the title of Miss Binibining Pilipinas USA Tourism allowing her to travel to the Philippines to meet the president as an ambassador of tourism. In 2014 she joined *Asians On Film* hosting interviews for their media outlet. Alongside acting, Melissa is a Co-Founder of production company 5B Films, and has produced multiple pilots and short films since 2016.

CREDITS

Produced by Big Squid Productions

In Association with
MewNowTV

A Kyle Fritz Valle Film

Created, Directed & Story by

Kyle Fritz Valle

Written by

Kyle Fritz Valle
Manny Luke
Erin Áine

Produced by

Kyle Fritz Valle
Erin Áine
Manny Luke

Director of Photography

Kyle Fritz Valle
Edwin Jimenez

Editor

Kyle Fritz Valle

Music Composer & Score by

Rob Valle

Featuring Music by

Monday's Mona Lisa

Associate Producers

Melissa Jane Rodriguez
Christian Casillas
Joshua Adams
Chad Tolson

Production Designer & Costume Designer

Kyle Fritz Valle

Casting Director

Erin Áine

Unit Production Manager

Kyle Fritz Valle

First Assistant Director

Phil Kruse

Second Assistant Director

Erin Áine

CAST

Rocket... Manny Luke
Claire... Erin Áine
Punkie... Punkie Johnson

Javier... Christian Casillas
Zander... Carlo Mendez
Mama Bear... Nichole McAuley
Mystic Man... J. Michael Trautmann
Ray... Melissa Jane Rodriguez
Kim... Hendrix Deveroux
T... Anna Valencia
Master of Ceremonies... Erin Maxick
Devan... Laughton B. Allen
Mr. Reynolds... Scott Anthony Simmons
Adriana Martinez... Mariana Guerrero
Rodger... Sterling Price
Tiffany... Crystal Cooper
Steve... Austin Kress
Ryan... Justin Hobson
Trevor... Chandler Darby
Cashier... Joshua Adams
Park Zombie... Joseph Drobezko II
Fritz the Cameraman... Kyle Fritz Valle
Female Spelunker... Ashlyn Henson
Spelunker... Benji Kaufman
Big Spelunker... Bertrand-Xavier Corbi
Newscaster... Ian Delaney
Supply Thor... Zach Gibson
Team Force #1... Shawn Cortel
Team Force #2... Mike Ferguson
Team Force #3... Liz Torres
AnimeCON West Judge... Aryiel Hartman
AnimeCON West Judge #2... Jeff Nguyen
Ralph... Phil Kruse
Rocket's Fan Girl... Taylor Green Johnson
AnimeCON West Attendee... Steven Skyler Dean
AnimeCON West Attendee... Sarah Palmer
AnimeCON West Attendee... Amy Lee Karow-Thara
AnimeCON West Attendee... Christine Georgiades
AnimeCON West Attendee... Nathan Brenner Hamilton
AnimeCON West Attendee... Ian M. White
AnimeCON West Attendee... Luis Marquez
AnimeCON West Attendee... Nathlye Abraham
AnimeCON West Attendee... Mariel Taren
AnimeCON West Attendee... Jessica Shaffer
AnimeCON West Attendee... Juan Carlos Zapata
Jerk in the Park... Edwin Jimenez Jr.

CREW

Production Supervisor

Kyle Fritz Valle

Art & Set Director

Kyle Fritz Valle

Camera Operator 1... Kyle Fritz Valle

1st AC... Phil Kruse

Sound Mixers... Kyle Fritz Valle

Tommy Figueroa

Sound Recording Artist

Chad Tolson

Boom Operator... Chad Tolson

Gaffer... Zach Gibson

Special Effects Supervisor... Kyle Fritz Valle

Location Manager... Kyle Fritz Valle

Assistant Location Manager... Erin Áine

Set Designer... Kyle Fritz Valle

Set Dresser... Kyle Fritz Valle

Props... Kyle Fritz Valle

Costumer... Crystal Valle

Key Makeup Artist... Joseph Drobezko II

Makeup Artist... Jessica Taylor

Visual Effects Supervisor... Kyle Fritz Valle

Lead Visual Effects Artist... Manny Luke

Assistant Visual Effects Artist... Kyle Fritz Valle

Post Production Supervisor... Kyle Fritz Valle

Production Coordinator... Kyle Fritz Valle

Casting Associate... Melissa Jane Rodriguez

Casting Assistant... Christian Casillas

Unit Publicist... Erin Áine

Assistant to Producers... Melissa Jane Rodriguez

Production Assistants... Mariana Guerrero

Justin Hobson

Post Production Sound Services

Kyle Fritz Valle

Tommy Figueroa

Sound Designer

Kyle Fritz Valle

Music Editor

Rob Valle

Featured Music Performed By:

Monday's Mona Lisa

Craft Service

Erin Áine

Catering Coordinator

Melissa Jane Rodriguez

SONGS

“DEMON”

Written & Performed by Monday's Mona Lisa

“ZOMBIECON/ IT'S A COMIC CON”

Written by Rob Valle
Performed by Monday's Mona Lisa

"ADDICTED TO CRAZY"
Written & Performed by Monday's Mona Lisa

"DIRTY LIARS"
Written by Rob Valle
Performed by Monday's Mona Lisa

"FAKE IT"
Written & Performed by Monday's Mona Lisa

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ZURICH AMERICAN INSURANCE COMPANY OF ILLINOIS

PRODUCTION LEGAL COUNSEL
JOSHUA KUSHNER

SPECIAL THANKS
ROB AND CRYSTAL VALLE

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