

Craig Engler

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Welcome to Media Masters, a series of one-to-one interviews with people at the top of the media game today. Today I'm joined down the line by Craig Engler, general manager at Shudder, the AMC network which has become the top streaming destination for horror movies. Craig launched breakout hit Creepshow at Shudder, the only premium service for fans of horror and suspense, and secured high-profile acquisitions including A Discovery of Witches. Before joining Shudder, Craig spent 15 years as a senior executive at Syfy and was part of the leadership team that created the long-term strategy for the channel. After leaving the network, he co-created and executive produced Syfy's hit series Z Nation, which ran for five seasons. Craig, thank you for joining me.

Thanks for having me. I'm excited to be here.

I'm excited to have you on, as we chatted before the tape started rolling, I am a subscriber and long-term fan of what you're doing at Shudder. And I was going to ask you actually, what a great job for a horror film buff. If I wasn't doing what I was doing, I'd love to do your job. When did you first get bitten by the horror bug?

You know, it's interesting people ask me that a lot and I had to really think about it. And it was when I was a kid, here in the states, Saturday afternoons, there was a local TV station at the time everybody watched TV over the air using antennas, right? We didn't have anything like streaming or anything like cable TV when I was super young. They had Saturday afternoon creature features and they would have all sorts of crazy movies. You know, everything from Godzilla movies, which are sort of a little more standard to sort of a low budget horror movie. And I actually watched them on a TV in my basement of my house because I had two brothers. And you had to sort of fight for who was watching the TV at the time. So there was an old TV in the basement and I would go down and watch creature features and scare myself but had a great time. And so I've always loved horror and also science fiction and fantasy and all the genres like that.

Do you still get scared a little bit now, when you're sort of looking at material and things that you might buy, or are you sort of, now you're a professional and you know the secrets behind the scenes, you're kind of a tiny bit jaded or can you still sort of switch off the industry glasses and still be a normal person chomping on your popcorn and being scared?

You know, I get scared less often than I used to, but a good scary movie will still scare me. We did this movie *Host*, which was by Rob Savage, a UK director, and it was a zoom seance gone wrong. And we were watching the rough cut of it when they first gave us the first rough cut and I got scared by the rough cut in a couple of moments. There was also a movie at Sundance film festival when you go to the Sundance film festival, a lot of the movies screen at midnight. So they have sort of midnight genre movies. And there was a movie called *The Night House* by a great director named David Bruckner who actually directed a segment of *Creep Show*. And I watched that and I was literally pulling my jacket up over my face cause I was so scared at one point.

It's weird, isn't it? That it's uncomfortable to watch. And yet we do that for leisure that we subject ourselves to feeling terrible, to feel good.

Yeah. There's actually a lot of research around why people watch and enjoy horror and it's sort of like a rollercoaster, right? You go on a rollercoaster, you're terrified but you're safe. So you can have this experience of being scared while at the same time being safe. And then at the end of it you have this adrenaline pumping, it's almost like a catharsis. So a lot of people watch horror because they like to be scared, but then they like to come back and be safe after the movie's over.

I mean, Shudder houses major franchises, like *Friday the 13th Halloween* as well as lots of new material. I hate to sort of use corporate language, but do you have a vision for the platform? Is there a sort of mission statement? When you look at the schedule that day for, for Shudder, how would you know that that's going to reflect what you want in terms of your plan for the channel?

The primary thing that we're looking for is to find great films and series to show people. And the horror genre is very broad, right? A lot of people sort of think horror as just slashers, but there's literally dozens and dozens of sub genres of horror. You know, some of my favorites are scary nun movies, or J horror, which is Japanese horror. And what we're really looking for is great films and great series that are somewhere in the genre. And some of the stuff we run is super scary, right. You know, it's like scary horror. Some of it could be horror comedy. What we're really looking for is the best of the best. And what we always talk about is finding ways to surprise and delight our members. You know, one of the things that we really avidly pursued was this quote unquote lost movie by George Romero called *The Amusement Park*. It was this crazy movie. He directed his work for religious organisations, talking about the sort of fears and prejudices that people have as they age. Right? What kind of prejudices did they face as they got older? What kind of

fears do they have? And this movie was never seen, but the George A Romero Foundation found a copy and they restored it and we brought that to our members. Is it a horror movie? Hey, you know, it's got horror elements to it, but what it really was was this sort of first film by one of the godfathers of horror George Romero, that we were able to bring people and put in context. And I think finding those gems, finding these things that people don't even know exist that we bring out and then we tell them about, and then they get to watch it and really enjoy it. That's one of the things we love doing. We get super excited when we're on the trail of something like that or something new. Like *Host*, *Host* started as two minutes short that Rob Savage had put on Twitter. We saw it, we passed it around our sort of small acquisitions team and said, hey, look at this, this Short's awesome. We happen to be in touch with his manager. And they said, oh, you know what? We could get the pitch for the full length feature. And then they sent us this pitch and it really had two words in it that made it exciting, which was zoom seance. So this is the time where everybody was in lockdown already because of Covid. So we're all on zoom. These friends meet weekly, they have these zoom things. And one week they have a zoom seance and it goes wrong. And this sort of demon entity sort of starts killing them. And we thought, wow, what a brilliant concept that really reflects a lot of the fears that we have going on. We're isolated on these zoom calls, even though we're on these calls with other people we're isolated in our own homes, what if something went wrong, et cetera, et cetera. So we love to find these things that really kind of surprise and delight people, whether it's something old that we're unearthing or something new that we were helping to create.

I love the balance of the old great, but also the fresh new material as well. Cause you don't just want to be a repository of all the old stuff. One of the things I really like about it is revisiting from a kind of documentary format, some of the horror greats as well. I've enjoyed some amazing behind the scenes documentaries on your channel as it were. Is that part of the strategy? Are you looking at more original documentary content too?

Yeah. We look at documentary content where it makes sense. I joined Shudder in 2018 and one of the first things I did is I sort of poured through all the data about what people were watching and quickly realised a lot of people really enjoy documentary stuff. It amazes me, we have a six hour documentary on the Friday the 13th franchise called *Crystal Lake Memories*. And not only were people watching it, they were watching all six hours. And in some cases they were watching all six hours and saying, I wish there were more so we look for really smart documentary stuff or sometimes we make it on our own. And the caveat for us is, it can't be sort of throw away glamorising just a piece of the genre. You know, something that you might find that's not really done well or doesn't really speak to their genre as a whole. So we really look at these documentaries that really open your eyes. The perfect documentary for us is it explores horror through a new lens and it gives you a new appreciation of the material, which we did in this documentary called *Foreign War, A History of Black Horror*. And it really looks at horror through the lens of black viewers and black filmmakers. And when you watch that documentary, you get a whole different perception of horror and the horror genre and how it depicts people, how it depicts culture. And it really gives you not only a great appreciation for everything,

but kind of a reason to go back and watch stuff or watch things that you never saw before.

I mean, the horror fan base is a very knowledgeable community. How do you tap into that?

We talked to a lot of the people in the community who are sort of experts. A lot of folks are online in the same places. There is what they call horror, Twitter, right? It's all those sort of horror fans on Twitter. Reddit has a huge horror community with like 2.5 million members. And they're constantly talking about the genre and then the genre isn't super big in terms of the creators. So you can go to a film festival, you know, there's a famous horror film festival called Fantastic Fest in Austin. And you can go there and literally Guillermo Del Toro might show up one day or Elijah Wood who's a huge horror fan and has a horror company called SpectreVision will be there. And you can meet everybody and you get to know everybody pretty quickly. And it's a great community and very supportive of one another.

Do you think horror has been marginalised by the other platforms instead of being put center stage or being given a prominent strand. Is that where the opportunity for Shudder to come through is?

I think it's not so much that horror has been marginalised. I think that horror is not well understood. I think on some of the other sorts of major platforms, it's a real mixed bag. You know, they might have some really great original stuff and a couple of older gems, but then they just have a lot of horror movies that maybe aren't the best movies that people want to watch. And I think they just don't really understand the genre or what makes one horror movie more appealing than another. Like we always talk about how great a movie the Exorcist Three is, right? So Exorcist came out, obviously one of the most successful, most famous scariest of all time. Exorcist Two comes out, and it's not great. Exorcist Three comes out and by that time, there's a little bit of a disdain for the sequels. The first one was great, whatever, but people overlook how great Exorcist Three is. So not only will we put Exorcist Three on Shudder, but we'll go out of the way to tell people, hey, listen, you may not have liked two, you may have not tried three. You should really try three. Not only is it a great movie, but it is intense. It is scary. It is in it's way as good as the first movie, just in a different sort of format. But everybody who got turned off by two, maybe never made it to three. And I think when these movies show up on other platforms, they're not really telling you why you should watch them. You know, they're not really giving you any context around them. They're just kind of throwing them up and then people might not watch them. So we really try to go out of our way to say, this is why we chose this movie. This is why you should watch it. And we think you're going to really enjoy it.

I think one of the tests for me about whether a horror film was truly memorable is if there's one iconic scene, I remember remembering the Exorcist Three it's in a hospital where someone comes out of nowhere with a pair of garden shares to chop someone's head off, that sent shivers down my spine. It was

shocking and horrifying. I was actually going to ask you, do you think horror funds are looked down upon a little bit by the mainstream media?

Sometimes they are, and sometimes they aren't. And I think all fandoms have a tendency to be sort of marginalised or looked down on from time to time. I think what's really happened though, which we're very excited about and I'm very excited about, is horror has gotten back into the mainstream. For a long time and I always talk about this, horror in the eighties really kind of set the tone for the next few decades, because what was happening is you were seeing a lot of, sort of cheap and cheerful slasher movies that were sort of cashing in on the success of things like Halloween and Friday the 13th. And so many of them were made that horror for a long time, sort of became synonymous with cheap slasher movies. And I think that really kind of did a bit of a disservice to the genre because people were overlooking so many of the great movies that weren't cheap slashers that were also coming out and horror has always gone through phases, right? In the very beginning of Hollywood in the twenties and thirties you had Frankenstein and Dracula and Wolfman. Those are some of the biggest movies in the history of film. We're still making and remaking those movies today, in the seventies you had these blockbusters, what I like to think of as kind of literary horror movies, right? Rosemary's Baby and the Exorcist, based on books about real people in the real world, those were huge blockbusters, even Jaws, right? The first blockbuster movie, many considered a horror movie, some people call it a thriller, but it's really a horror movie. And then I think we know we kind of hit the eighties and then you also had a lot of like cheap movies made for VHS when VHS came out and so horror kind of fell into a bit of a rut, then it sort of goes very self-referential like metal horror of the nineties. And I think now we're finally back to that place where people realise, oh my gosh, horror can be anything, horror can be, Get Out. Which is sort of very reflective of the culture that we live in of our times and a great movie. But it can also be Stephen King's It, which came out a few years ago, the new one and set box office records. So horror spans this huge gamut of different types of sub genres. And I think people are finally rediscovering how great it is. And the great thing about that is I don't think we're going to go back. I think people are just sort of realising, oh, horror is great. And there's lots of different kinds of horror. And now I'm going to watch horror movies. It's not like I'm going to start snubbing them again. That was a very, long-winded answer to a very short question.

I've been criticised for asking questions that are too long, and this is a seven hour podcast anyways. So you've got plenty of time. What are your ambitions for the platform, for Shudder? What direction of travel are you going to take things? What's top of your to do list at the moment?

I think one of the biggest things is we really want to start making our own movies and series from the ground up. A lot of times we're sort of at the mercy of the market of who is making something and where is it being sold? You know, we go to the same film festivals that Netflix, Hulu and Amazon go to. We see a lot of the same movies. Luckily we see a lot of things in those movies that they might not see. So they might pass on a movie and we'll buy it and it'll be a big hit for us. But we also realised there's some gaps in some filmmakers that we think could make some great movies.

We want to give them the tools and the ability to make those movies. And also some ideas that we have on our own. So we really want to get into our own production while we continue to acquire great movies. And while we continue to program a great library of movies.

To what extent is your job a little bit like a manager of a football or a soccer or basketball team where you're trying to keep an eye on young talent where you could commission them to direct and produce a movie, and they'll be cheap because at the start of their career, but they're insanely talented. So it's more about how you can keep your eyes peeled and your ears to the ground.

Yeah, our acquisition team which is a very small group, but they're fantastic. They read every script coming in. They know all the upcoming filmmakers, in some cases we're looking at the short films that they're putting out there, or just reading scripts that get sent our way. So we're always on the lookout for who's up and coming, who's doing great stuff, who needs just a little bit more, sometimes when we'll commission a movie, they're not super big budgets. So other people might not want to finance them because they're not going to turn into a hundred million dollar blockbuster movies that are released by Universal or whatnot. So I think there's a real opportunity for Shudder and we've been trying to dive into this in a big way of coming to the table and bringing what the filmmaker needs at that point in their career. So sometimes people need to go from a short film to a lower, one, \$2 million film before they jump into a hundred million dollar film.

You know the guy who turned down the Beatles and famously said that guitar music had sort of run its costs. Does that keep you up at night, that you might miss an opportunity yourself, that you might pass on something that someone else takes? And does that happen the other way, where you're passionately behind a filmmaker and everyone thinks it's great, this project, this movie, and then it fails for whatever reason? Being creatively brave means that you're also going to have failures.

We're lucky in that we haven't had anything that I would consider a failure. I think, you know, we've had things that have been super successful and things that have been pretty successful, usually by the time we're picking a project and sort of like betting on that filmmaker or that idea, we have a pretty good understanding of what they can bring to the table. And the thing about it is it's easier in some ways, not in all ways. And it's definitely harder in some ways, but it's easier in some ways to execute well on a lower budget, because a lot of times these are smaller, contained stories around a family or a person or a location. So you're not doing like James Bond has to fly a helicopter in Austria and then go skydiving in South Africa. You know, we're not doing these huge, massive movies.

You just need someone to tiptoe into a dark room wondering what's there.

Exactly. And so I think that gives us a good opportunity. The only thing is from time to time, there are movies that we want to buy that we're unable to because everybody sees what we see in them. And then they'll go for big dollars for somebody where we can't get there yet. I would have loved to have bought *The Night House*, the movie I was talking about that scared me at Sundance. I think Fox Searchlight bought it for \$12 million or something crazy out of Sundance, which is one of the biggest sales in the history of Sundance. So I don't think we were quite there yet, but you know, mostly we're not really afraid of failing and even something that doesn't come out perfectly. We'll still be a great movie.

Let's talk about my favorite TV show, which might genuinely be my favorite TV show, *Creepshow*. I mean, it's been a huge success, I watched it from season one, I know we just finished season three. It updated the elements that made the film a success for today's audiences. In lockdown, I went insane and bought a 98 inch ultra HD television, and it looks amazing on my TV, the colours are bright. You can actually read the bits of the comic, all of the writing within the transition. I mean, tell us about the whole journey. How did that idea come about? How did you get it off the ground and tell us about what you're going to do with it, how it's just become such a huge success.

Yeah. *Creepshow* is an amazing series of coincidences that allowed *Creepshow* to happen. So first of all, one of the things is we have a long list that we would love to be a part of and continue for instance, right now, the *Friday the 13th* franchises in complete limbo, right? Like in terms of legally who owns it, who can sell it. So, you know, we would love to be the place that's making the *Friday the 13th* movie, but we're not able to. So we have this long list of things we'd love to be a part of. *Creepshow* was at the absolute top of our list. The original movie for anyone who doesn't know it, all of the segments were written by Stephen King and directed by George Romero. They were fantastic, you've had stars like Adrian Barbeau and it was really a fantastic anthology movie where there was, I think it was five segments in the original movie, five different stories that each one was spectacular in its own way. So we had *Creepshow* on the top of our list. When I was a TV writer, producer, I worked with a manager who had a production company. He happened to know the guys who had *Creepshow*. And when I moved over to Shudder, he called me up and said, hey, would you guys ever want to get *Creepshow*? And I said, it's at the top of our list. Let's go get it. So he was able to put this deal together with the rights holders of *Creepshow* to bring it to the table. At the same time, Greg Nicotero had reached out to him because Greg had, oddly enough, read a short story I had written in an anthology called *Knights of the Living Dead*, which were stories set on the *Night of the Living Dead*, the movie. And this is the last sort of project that George Romero did. And because I had done a zombie TV show, I was asked to be part of this anthology. Greg wanted to make this short story into a movie. So he called my former manager, not realising I wasn't there anymore. And my manager said, well, no, you know, Craig's over at Shudder, but by the way, I happened to be working on *Creepshow*, do you have an interest in it? Greg did not work on the first *Creepshow* movie, but it was the first movie set he ever visited. He was friends with George Romero and George was just like, hey, come on visit the set of *Creepshow* if you want. So he went and that's where he met Tom Savini, Tom Savini later became his

mentor. And Greg is now this special effects legend. So by an incredibly bizarre series of circumstances, Greg is now attached to Creepshow, which was literally the movie that launched him into his career, even though he didn't work on it. That's where he got the bug of wanting to be part of filmmaking. So he always talks about how his career has come full circle because he started out before he was even involved in film. He went to the set of this movie and now he's the showrunner of Creepshow. And I think our plans for Creepshow are to keep doing more, bigger, better. You know, one of the things is we're always looking to tell new stories on Creepshow. We were very lucky in season one that Stephen King allowed us to adapt one of his stories. And we also adapted a story by Joe Hill, Stephen's son. Who's also a fantastic horror writer and we've adapted a couple of Joe's stories now. So we were able to have this connective tissue back to the very first movie that the on Creepshow, the original movie, a guy named John Harrison has directed several segments for us. Adrian Barbeau who very famously started a segment of the Creepshow movie called The Crate, came back and appeared in our version of Creepshow. So we have all this connective tissue and we really consider the series a continuation of the movie franchise, not a reboot, not a reimagination. We are just continuing it. And I think Greg is super excited to continue to tell new, interesting stories and really open up the Creepshow universe to more storytellers that might not have had a chance to tell their stories yet.

It looks absolutely gorgeous on the screen and it's great fun. We love the music as well. My wife and I, at the beginning and at the end. And in fact, one of the things that shocked us both when we're listening to the music at the end is when the credits are rolling. Just how many hundreds of people are involved in putting a show like this together. I mean, I'd be interested in what your job is in terms of, do you say, right, we're doing Creepshow, set a budget and then leave Greg to get on with it because there's a huge amount of people to coordinate. How do you even get a show like that off the ground?

Well in this case, we are licensing the show from the producer, which is a production company called The Cartel. And The Cartel is really responsible for things like booking the stages and finding the locations and finding all the crew. Greg is heavily involved in choosing everything, he runs the show. So when you're a showrunner, you're kind of like the CEO of the show, he basically is responsible for approving everything. We came in, negotiated with them and settled on a budget for what we could make the show for. And so they go and they make the show. The way that creative leader show has done is Greg's sort of every season brings us a list of stories or story ideas that he wants to make. We talk through those. And we talk about which ones we feel like work well. And oftentimes it's the case where we'll have two similar story ideas. So we can't really make both of them because you'd sort of almost feel like you were seeing the same story twice. So we have to decide which one we want to make. Then we'll start getting initial drafts of the script, and we'll talk a lot about, is this a Creepshow story? One of the things that makes Creepshow resonate with people, is it's one of those horror stories where there's usually a comeuppance, somebody has done something and they kind of get their due at the end. Karma comes around. So we talk a lot about what is the arc of the story. And, also a lot of Creepshow is about why are these events happening to these characters

right now? What is it about this character that makes them the most interesting character to have this thing happening to them? So we talk a lot about that. So over time, we'll sort of whittle down that story list into the 12 segments. We'll get different drafts of scripts, and we'll keep refining those drafts almost up until the day that we're shooting. We'll talk about the guest cast, you were talking about Justin Long and we were talking about Adrian Barbeau, one of the things we said is we'd really love to find a way to bring some of the original Creepshow actors back. Somebody at the time and I can't remember who had a connection to Adrian, and we said, oh, we would love to get Adrian back. Let's find out, is there a role that makes sense for her, oh yeah, there is a role. So we'll bring her back or people will throw out actor ideas for specific roles. We'll approve those. And then it's really Greg who takes all that. And he also makes all the special effects through his company, all the creature effects. So there's a lot of creatures that are made. He's always texting us pictures and little videos of the creatures being made in the shop, which is always fun to see all those creatures that were two months ago, they were just a couple of words on a page. Now they're three-dimensional, they're in Greg studio, they've come to life. They look amazing. And really the day-to-day stuff is all handled by Greg and his team, they work incredibly hard. There are hundreds of people that work on every TV show, but especially Creepshow. And they do this fantastic job. And then we get the rough cuts and we give them notes on that. Everything we do is designed to really take whatever the story is that they are trying to tell and help them tell it in the best way possible. You know, you've heard a lot of horror stories about the networks giving notes to show runners or creators, and they don't understand, or don't make the story better. And we'll literally say, here are our notes. We don't have to do any of these notes. Here's why we're giving these notes. Let's talk them through. It's a great conversation. Usually a lot of times Greg's like, yeah, we know about that. We're already fixing that, or that's interesting. I see the problem you're pointing out. Here's a different way to fix it that makes it even better. We're like, oh, great that's awesome. You know we're only here to help them make a better show and to help them realise their vision of the show. So we're not here to dictate stories or anything like that. We're really helping them with story selection, guest cast, and just keeping things, you know, on track. And occasionally, you know, there are bumps in the road. Oh, we were going to shoot a lake monster episode, but we can't shoot at the lake anymore because the lake is being drained for fishing season or something. And that's always, you know, the sort of hands-on producing. Okay. What do we do now? How do we fix this? Can we change the story? Do we have to throw that story out and get a new one? Stuff like that.

You've had some incredible guest cast actors, as you said, I remember Kiefer Sutherland was in last year, the animated one way stuck on the desert island. I was actually going to ask you about the animation, because that was the special, that was fantastic. But one of the segments in season three was also animated. Is that something that you enjoy doing? Are you going to do more of that?

So the animation really came to us in an interesting way. When the first Covid lockdowns happened basically production around the world shut down, TV and film production. We were intending to make, originally season two of Creepshow, which

aired this past April, would have aired a year ago in October, but we weren't able to film it because all production was shut down. However, Greg came to us with an idea of doing an animated special. There are some stories we get that we can't really film on our budgets. And one of them, oddly enough, is a guy on a desert island, hacking off pieces of himself and eating them to stay alive. Which is, I'm blanking on the title of the story. It's a great Stephen King short story survivor type. And we wanted to do that story as live action, but for a lot of reasons, we couldn't. So Greg came to the table and said, what if we did an animated episode? We can film that with animation. And we use some animation at the beginning of the end of every segment to do the comic book stuff. Cause Creepshow is a TV series that is actually based on old time horror comics like EC comics. So we always have these comic panels in them and he was like, we could do this whole animated episode. And then it's easier to secure actors for voice work than it is for physical production, because it's much easier for them to go into a studio and do voice work in a day. And it's very easy time-wise they can just go to a studio, generally it's near them, and knock out all their lines one day. They don't have to show up on a set somewhere in another state day after day after day. So that enables you to get a sort of bigger cast that you might not be able to get, which in this case was Kiefer Sutherland, who did an amazing job. I cannot imagine another person doing a better job in that voice role. And so Greg came to us and said, we could do this animated episode during lockdown, even if we can't do live action. And then we could get bigger, better guest stars. And so we did that one to sort of have some Creepshow last October to kind of keep the lights on and let people know, no, despite the pandemic, we're still gonna make this. It's still gonna come back. And here's sort of a little taste of Creepshow to keep you going.

I mean, and also getting actors to play against type. Cause I've always remembered Ethan Embry is playing really nice guys and he played a real asshole in I think it was season three, episode one, where he played the evil stepfather.

He was fantastic. I think that Greg said, hey, we want to get Ethan for this. And we were like, yeah, let's try it. And he absolutely killed that role. I mean, he's great. And you're right. He does play against type and he's fantastic. There are more actors that we want to get than we can because oftentimes actors want to be involved in it. But, especially the sort of bigger name actors there, their schedules are always impossible to work around. So, you know, there's been a whole bunch of actors that we would love to get into Creepshow that we haven't been able to, for one reason or the other. Someday, hopefully we'll get to. But a lot of times the timing just doesn't work out.

But with it being an anthology show and having a different cast for every time, it's not like Star Trek, the next generation where it has to end at season seven cause they're all knackered you. This could go on for 30 seasons, could it not?

Theoretically, yeah. And I would love it to go for 30 seasons because we love Creepshow and it's been a huge hit for us.

How does it work? I've got such a backlog of things to watch that when it just pops up, I've just watched it, but is it like six episodes a year? Do you do a season a year? Is it every 10 months? How does the actual scheduling work? Is there a rhythm?

What we've been doing is six episode seasons and then each episode has two segments. So you get a total of 12 segments. You get basically 12 short installments of Creepshow, which is just like the original anthology film, right. There were five short segments in a two hour film. So we're very much keeping that sort of short segment alive. Right now I don't think we would do more because I think production-wise, it's a very challenging show and we're always working around Greg's schedule. Greg's very busy with lots of other things as well as Creepshow. So I don't think we would be able to do more and I don't think we'd want less because I think six is kind of like the minimum that you want. So right now we've settled on six as sort of this happy medium. And then we ended up doing two specials, one, which was a Halloween special. And then one was actually a segment we took out of a season and ran it as a Christmas special because Greg had wanted to do a sort of segment that was two parts and like was continued the next day. And he had this crazy Santa Claus werewolf.

They were stuck in the basement weren't they, waiting to be eaten.

Yeah, Shapeshifters Anonymous. Based on a great short story. And what happened is we did those two segments and Greg called me up one day. He's like, that'd make a great Christmas special. And I thought, wow, that's genius. And we're always looking for, believe it or not, holiday horror is a big thing. So people love to watch Christmas horror movies around Christmas time and Valentine's day horror movies around Valentine's day. So he wanted to do this Christmas special and we know that our members really love holiday horror programming. So we gave it a shot and you know, the episode turned out great. Greg directed it, he actually appears in it as one of the Santa clauses which is fantastic. And we ran that as a special, I don't think we would do that again only because now we're back into the production rhythm. So we don't need the specials to sort of fill in the gaps because we weren't able to air the season due to the pandemic.

And I remember the last episode of season three Drug Traffic, which I thought was a fantastic one. It's starting to sort of tackle almost contemporary political issues with the plight and the anxieties of people trying to get into America and cross the border. I thought Michael Rooker was fantastic as the customs guy, the guy with the gun who pulled someone off the line at first, you thought you might be one of these nasty types and a bully. And then you realise actually he's trying to do the best he can. And obviously you've got someone going around trying to eat people.

Yeah. That was a fantastic story by a writer named Mattie Dough. And she was very passionate about that story. And it was not only a great story, but what I love about that story is you have these two guys who are sort of congratulating themselves at

the end of the story for sort of having saved the day. But in reality, they've completely failed, right? And the sort of monster is escaping onto this bus to wreak havoc while they're sort of patting themselves on the back. So everything about that story, it's great because everything you think is true is not really true. You think Michael Rooker is playing this one type, but he's really not. You think this other person is this altruistic person, but they're really not. You think these guys sort of defeat the monster at the end, but they really don't. So that was a fantastic story. Greg was very passionate about that story. Maddie was very passionate. It ended up being a fantastic segment.

We always want the monster to win. I mean, one of the things that's really good about the show is there's a lot of very unpleasant people that get their just desserts at the end.

Yeah. I mean, that's that comeuppance I was talking about right. You know, like a lot of horror, it's a morality tale and you see these people who are not so great people and they get what's coming to them, but in a way that you don't expect. So, the hallmark of a great horror story or any story really is to have an ending that is unexpected yet, it feels inevitable, right? Like could never have predicted that ending, but it makes total sense. And you get it. And I think especially Drug Traffic, the segment we were talking about really kind of leans into that. But I think a lot of the Creepshow segments, the most successful ones are the ones that have that sort of comeuppance at the end.

I mean, AMC has joint ventures with BBC studios. Would you envisage a kind of Shudder UK US co-production?

I don't think that would happen for a variety of reasons. Mostly because I think that the way people are producing TV has changed quite a bit over the last few years, but of course, we're always open to working with everybody because we think great stories can come from anywhere.

I mean, you're a creator too with Syfy's hit series Z Nation, very ahead of the curve with this zombie virus storyline.

Z nation was fun. This is a very strange story again, which appears to be the story of my life, is strange coincidences. But when I worked at Syfy channel, my friends ran the Saturday night movie division. So Syfy would make these sort of cheap and cheerful monster movies, which are the movies I grew up watching. This goes back to the creature features I watched in the basement as a kid, and eventually I was sort of interested in that and said, hey, let me read some of your scripts. I had started out my career as a journalist and a writer. So I knew the writing end. I said, you know, one of the biggest problems we have with these movies is quite frankly, a lot of the scripts weren't very good. So I was like, if we could fix them in the script stage, the movies would turn out better and we'd get better ratings and all this stuff. And they were fine, they were swamped with work. So they're like, yeah, sure. I took a script that they had and reworked it with the writer and it turned out pretty good. And then at one point I pitched them a movie which was eventually to be called Zombie

Apocalypse, but I can't remember what the original title was. And I pitched them that movie and they were like, no, zombies don't do well on TV, we don't want to do a zombie movie. Then the walking dead came out and became the most successful TV series in the history of basic cable television. And so suddenly they said, hey, we want to put on a zombie show right away. And I said, well, good news guys. I still have this pitch. And then we made this movie called *Zombie Apocalypse*, which strangely enough, ended up starring Ving Rhames and Taryn Manning. *Zombie Apocalypse* was actually essentially the last episode of a five season long TV series. And it aired as a standalone movie. It did really well. I think it was like 70% above the average rating for a Saturday night movie. They loved it. And at that time, I'd been at the network a long time and I was getting ready to leave. And I said, well, let me pitch you the TV version of the first five seasons of that movie. That was like, it's a five season TV show. So pitch that and they were like, we want to make this. So we went ahead and we made it very successful, it would not exist without *The Walking Dead*. *Zombie TV* became sort of something people got really interested in after *The Walking Dead* showed them that it could be done well, it could be incredibly gripping and compelling. It wasn't just people running around trying to kill people trapped in houses. So *Z Nation* did really well, ran for five seasons. There's a spinoff on Netflix that I'm not involved with called *Black Summer*, which is fantastic. And I know they did two seasons, I think they might be coming on to a third season.

I'm asking, do you still have ambitions as a screenwriter? And does it help you as a commissioner dealing with creative talent that you've been at the other side of the desk?

That is a question I often ask myself, because part of the thing is when you're used to writing movies and TV episodes, you can help other people write theirs better sometimes. Sometimes you can give them insights and you have to really know when you're helping something or you're just changing it. So a lot of times we talk a lot about how to give notes to creators. And I try to give notes in the way that I think they're going to be the most helpful. And you never want to give a note that makes something just as good but different. Because then you're just sort of stepping on somebody else's vision. So you really have to try to look at the mechanics of things and say, okay, here's the story you're trying to tell. Or at least I think you're trying to tell it and sometimes that is a discussion that really brings out a lot of interesting things about whatever movie or series we're working on. So what we try to do is we try to have conversations about stuff. We try not to give notes in the traditional sense. You know, a buddy of mine was talking about a show he was on, I can't remember what the network was. It was probably like NBC or ABC or something like that. And they said they would literally get like 30 pages of line notes, which is when you're giving a note about an individual line within a script, 30 pages of line notes. And we would sit on a call for two and a half hours and they would read all these notes and we had to do them all. There were no exceptions. And if we didn't do the notes, they would get very upset with us. And to me, I don't think you're making a story necessarily better if you're doing that. It's more like, okay, what is the intent of the story? How do you best realise that intent and where might it not be working now? And how could it work better? So we had a show called *Slasher Flesh and Blood*, which we just picked up. It was a new show for us this year. There were three

seasons of Slasher, one aired on Chiller and then it was canceled. Then two went on Netflix, and then it was canceled, all the seasons standalone. They're a season long anthology. Sort of like American horror story. So you can watch season three and never have watched one or two. So we had the opportunity to make a fourth season of Slasher and we talked with the creators. And one of the things I love about them is when we talk to them about the scripts, we sit there and say, okay, I think what you're trying to do in act three is get us to see this or feel this way. A lot of times talking about feelings is very helpful when you're talking about scripts, because everything sort of comes down to emotion. So how am I supposed to be feeling at the end of this? How am I supposed to be feeling about this character? How am I supposed to be feeling about where the show is going? So we would sit down with the slasher team and say, hey, you know, in act three, I think you want us to feel X, but really what I'm feeling is Y. And I think it's because this happened, but we're not sure. We just want to throw that out to you and get your thoughts on it. And a lot of times they'll be like, oh, we wanted you to feel X, not Y. Now we understand why you're feeling Y, let us go take it away and come back. And then they would come back and have an incredibly elegant solution that works 10 times better than anything we were suggesting, the process is working the best if that happens. If you're helping people understand where there's things that aren't working and getting it to work better, that's kind of like the ideal, but the unideal is you never want to note something just for the sake of giving a note or changing it. You definitely don't want to make it worse. And I think having been on both sides of the table, it really helps to understand what somebody might need in that moment to help them get to where they want to go versus quote, unquote, fixing a story, you know? And then sometimes it's just logic. Like you have two in act one in three and act two and two plus three should equal five, but it's equaling 17. So I don't know if you knew that, oh right. Oh, we didn't realise, we took out this scene and that affected that scene and stuff like that. So another very long winded way of saying, trying to help everyone the best way that they can be helped without interfering with your creative process or inserting yourself into the creative.

I've been reflecting on what you said earlier about how The Walking Dead helped get Z Nation off the ground because the zombie show worked well and therefore your idea can get greenlit. I remember when I was a kid, one of my earliest memories of TV was I really liked Nightrider and then they brought out Street Talk. And I remember thinking even as a kid they're just trying to copy Nightrider, but with a motorbike. And I don't think it lasted very long. I wondered how do you deal with that as the boss of a channel, that if there's clearly a demand for a certain type or genre of a show, you want to create something, but it doesn't want to just be a me too or a carbon copy. And you're going to sort of pull a few of the strings that some of the tapestry might unravel, or you might actually capitalise on that demand and do something distinctive.

I have a very somewhat simple view having been exposed to entertainment across multiple networks. The thing that I have really come to believe in, I don't know if this is true or not, but I'll tell you, I think it's true. Is that good trumps everything else or great, let's say great content trumps everything else. So you might sit there and say,

oh, there's 20 zombie shows on TV and nobody wants zombies anymore, they're burned out. It's never going to work. The Walking Dead has taken all the air out of the genre because anyone who's watching a zombie show will watch The Walking Dead. Because it's the best zombie show ever. And one of the best shows on TV, right? So they're going to watch that one, but then someone will come and they'll have a great idea of something that is similar, but not the same. Maybe it's a similar setting or something like that. And so great always triumphs everything else in my opinion. So what you're always looking for is great. People will sit there and say, oh, nobody wants another scary doll movie. There's too many scary doll movies. Annabel, blah, blah, blah. And then you'll get a great script about a scary doll that reinvents the scary doll genre in a way no one else has done. And you sit there and say, we have to make this. We have to get this into the hands of people. We have a pitch, I can't say anything about it right now, but we got a pitch for a movie idea, which is a movie idea, it has echoes of other ideas, but this one was so specific and so clear and so great that we were like, we have to make this movie no matter what. And again, I'll go back to Host. Host was that, oh, we have to make a zoom seance movie, everyone will tell you the found footage genre, which technically Hosts is classified as a found footage horror movie. Nobody wants more found footage. It's been over since the days of Blair Witch, and then lo and behold Host comes along and everyone says, oh, that's this generation's Blair Witch. You've reinvented or reinvigorated the genre. So great is always what you're looking for. I don't care how many movies of this type are out there or how many shows are out there. There's always room for a great one.

It's risky creatively, isn't it. If you get it wrong, cause even as a viewer, you get invested in, like for example, I watched the trailer for Apple TV's Invasion and I thought that the caliber of the people involved with this project, the whole thing with their CGI and it been told from five different locations, I thought this can't fail. This is going to be absolutely brilliant. My wife and I watched episode one and we looked at each other and thought that was unbelievably terrible. Nothing happened. And that's the thing, isn't it? You can in theory get everything right. Hopefully all the leavers are in the right order and it can still fail for whatever reason.

Yeah. I mean, I haven't watched invasion, so I can't speak to it. I think that money and talent only get you to a place if the story is there. And so, it sounds to me like they perhaps have a story problem or at least, for you as a viewer, they have a story problem, which is it's not working out. Everything in entertainment is a risk and you know, even things that you are sure will work might not work. Or there's been a lot of things that have been thrown on the air, not thinking they were very good, but they went ahead and made them and they put them on and lo and behold, they become hits and there's famous stories of people passing on all of the great TV shows that are ever made. I'm pretty sure Robert Kirkman who created The Walking Dead told a story about NBC, not only not wanting to do the show, but when they didn't want to do the show saying something like, does it have to be zombies? Of course it has to be, you can't do The Walking Dead without zombies. But, there's always those stories and you're never a hundred percent sure, but I think when we're looking at material, you can kind of tell where things are, are they going to be good, great, or okay. And generally a lot of the stuff will at least turn out pretty good. So even the

worst version of something will probably be pretty good because the people involved are great and the story is great. And they might get hit with crazy circumstances like a pandemic hitting you in the middle of it and having to shut down production and stuff like that. But the great ideas will still survive through all that.

AMC networks support independent cinema with services like Sundance. Do you see what you're doing as a challenger brand to giants like Netflix and Amazon? Are they frenemies? For example, I watch Shudder on Amazon Prime here in the UK. It's an extra five pounds a month, then I get that as a channel. But obviously I have to go to Amazon prime to watch it.

That's a great question. We really see ourselves as kind of companions to what people call whole home services or services that have so much content that somebody will always find something they like. So Netflix literally tries to have something for everyone and obviously quite successful at it. So when somebody is signing up for Shudder, I don't think, except in very rare circumstances, are they going to cancel Netflix and then subscribe to Shudder? Probably not. What's probably going to happen is they're going to subscribe to Netflix. They're going to watch a couple of the horror movies that Netflix has and enjoy them because everybody has one or two great horror movies. And then they're going to realise they want more horror movies or supernatural or thriller movies, Netflix, isn't going to have them. So then they're going to add on Shudder. So that's called stacking, right.

Like an abundance mentality, a rising tide lifts all boats.

Yeah. And what Shudder tries to be is we're not trying to be your only streamer. We're trying to be your favorite streamer. So by that when you find Shudder, you found it because you've heard about us, someone's told you about a movie or a show that we have that you really want to check out. And we have a sort of reputation for the types of movies that we do. And people know they're going to get really great stuff if they subscribe to us. So we're not trying to replace Netflix, but we are trying to become your favorite service in your heart, right. In your heart. If you had to give up one, maybe you'd give up Shudder, or maybe you give up Netflix. We see people say, oh, I've got to give up streaming services, I started with Netflix and I have Shudder. I think I'd rather keep Shudder. That's what we want. We want to like, kind of win your heart. But in all likelihood, you probably have two or three services. If you subscribe to shutter, that's totally fine. We get it. I have two or three, I think I have five or six services. I have a six-year-old, so I have Disney Plus and I have Amazon because I subscribe to Amazon Prime and so I have a couple of services just because of the fact that I have a kid and then I shop on Amazon. So we're never going to be your only one, but we're going to be your favorite.

You are right though, it does bring into sharp focus about how many monthly subscriptions regular people can actually afford. Is there likely to be market consolidation? Or do you think they'll always be sort of segmented services?

First of all, I think people can sustain a lot more subscription services than people say they can, I always see these industry stories where it's like, oh, people will only ever have three subscription services. And I was like, they may say that on a survey, but in reality, they're going to have five or six, most people who have streaming services have a bunch of them because they have a bunch of different interests. And there are very specialised ones, what we call it, a targeted subscription service. You know, we think there's a really big audience for people who like horror, but at the same time, it's a targeted audience because we know what kind of stuff they like and we're going after them.

I had Clint Stinchcomb on the podcast a couple of weeks ago. Obviously I'm a big horror fan, but I'm also a big science buff. So CuriosityStream, I subscribe to both.

Yeah, there you go. And I think so one, I think people can sustain a lot more subscription services than the sort of quote unquote industry pundits think they will. Because of course, people will say, oh, do you want 10? I don't want 10, but in reality, they might have 10 because they use 10 in different ways. So I'm not too worried about how many services one person can have and will somebody drop Shudder because of it. I think it's more likely that they would drop one of these, what I said, whole home services. So if you have Netflix and Amazon, maybe you realise, well, I don't really need Netflix and Amazon cause I'm getting sort of similar types of stuff. They all have a variety of things that people like. So then you're going to kind of stick with the one you like, but if you're a horror efficienauto, I don't think you're going to drop Shudder. If you're really enjoying it, if we're doing our jobs, you're not going to drop it.

What advice would you give to someone listening to this who's perhaps starting out in their career in terms of how to succeed, because I mean, if you could run our listeners through your career as well. You mentioned earlier that you started your career as a journalist, did you not?

I did, yes. I went to school as a journalist a long time ago. I thought I would be a newspaper reporter. And I was in the newspaper business for a while. And I was at the very beginning of the end of the newspaper business. It was very clear when I was in the newspaper business, that newspapers were going to be subsumed by the internet. So I got out of the newspaper business, which I really enjoyed, and started my own sort of online company that talked about genre programming. It was kind of like the entertainment weekly for genre programming, which was bought by the Syfy channel. And I started working at Syfy. When another company buys your company, oftentimes they're bringing you on as what they call an acqui-hire, they acquired your company so that they can also hire you. So not only did Syfy acquire my company, but I had a three-year contract where I had to continue working with them. I thought for sure I would work for three years at Syfy, run out my contract and then go start another company. But I really enjoyed TV programming, which I hadn't been really exposed to before. I really enjoyed how TV worked, how series were made, how movies were made and ended up staying there I think it was 13 or 17 years. I think

it's 17 years, if you add on the years that I was sort of quote, unquote, a consultant for them, maybe it was 15 years, I can't remember exactly. But anyway, at the time I sort of then had been bitten by the TV bug and wanted to create my own show, which was Z Nation. So I left to create Z Nation. The problem with Z Nation is the production company we were dealing with was very sketchy and they were not paying the residuals. In fact, they're in a whole sort of legal situation, but the writer's guild because they haven't paid residuals. While I was with them, we sold the spinoff to Netflix called Black Summer. And I realised the more work I did for them, the more money they'd owe me that I would probably never get. And at the same time a recruiter had called saying, hey, you used to run the digital group at Syfy and Chiller. Shudder is looking for a GM. Do you want to take the job? And at first I didn't because I had two TV shows, we hadn't started the second one yet, but we were going to launch it. I just sold a movie to Syfy actually, we're making another movie. And then I thought, well, maybe I should just meet the people at Shudder. You know, maybe I'll sell them a show or whatever. And it was very interesting. I'd heard a lot of people who love Shudder, but I wasn't a subscriber at the time. And I went in and I met with the people who they're no longer at AMC, but they had created Shudder and really liked them and really thought they were smart. And then they offered me the job and I turned it down because I said, I can't really walk away from a couple of TV shows and a movie as much as I would love to run the service. And then they had me meet with Josh Sapin, who at the time was the CEO of the company. And he and I had a very casual chat and he just made me believe that AMC was a true believer in streaming and that they were going to give this the best run for its money and that they were going to do it the right way. And then I had long conversations with my friends and family, and I was like, I can't turn the roll down to run a streaming service, my own network at the same time that I'm not getting paid for making a hit show over on Syfy. So I decided to make the jump to Shudder. So I don't think that's terrifically useful to anyone because I don't think anyone can replicate that. Be a journalist, realise newspapers are going out of business, start your own company, have it acquired by the Syfy channel, not really want to work there, but ended up loving it and staying there, then leaving to create your own show. Would you then leave to go take this job at Shudder? I would say for anybody who's interested in the business, just learn as much about business as you can. And there has never been a better time to learn about the business because executives, show creators, actors, they're all completely accessible on social media. You can go see how things work, get the kind of behind the scenes info that was never available to people 20 years ago and learn and listen to great podcasts. You know, a couple of my friends who are writers in Los Angeles do a podcast called children of tendu, T.E.N.D.U. And they really break down the entire TV writing process. If you want to be a TV writer, they tell you exactly how it works and it doesn't work the way most people think it does. TV writing is a very specific skill set. It's completely different from feature film writing. If you want to be a feature film writer, you should go listen to the podcast by a guy named John August, who is a great film writer and I think he makes TV as well and a bunch of other things, he breaks down the whole film industry. So if you, if you want to do this stuff, you have access and behind the scenes information that you've never had before, and also you can go make stuff now. The biggest thing we tell everybody is go make something because I will watch a two minute short film, but I won't necessarily read a script for a short film because we don't make short films. You know, I'll go back to, I've been using Host as my sort of go-to example for the

podcast. I'll continue using it. Rob Savage, we made Hosts because he made a two minute prank film with his friends that he put on Twitter and we thought it was brilliant and approached him. So what I would say is if you're at all interested in the industry, if you're creative, go start making stuff, you can write a script for free. It doesn't cost you anything to sit down with, even a pen and paper. I have a lot of friends who write all their scripts, longhand on yellow notepads. You don't even need a computer to write a script. And if you want to be on the executive side of things, start following executives on Twitter, on Instagram, read what they say, they're doing a and a's on Reddit, talking about how the industry works. So, go over there. So there's never been a better time to learn about the industry or get involved in the industry.

It's interesting, isn't it? We assume when starting out that your career will go in a straight line, like a progressive series of steps up to the top, but actually it's a bit like snakes and ladders, isn't it?

It definitely is. A lot of the very famous TV writers I know started out as completely different things. A lot of them actually started as journalists because in TV writing, you have to learn to write quickly and on deadline. Which is just what you do as a journalist. But, you know, I mean, there's a guy, Glen Mazarra, who was a showrunner of The Walking Dead for a while. He famously was on The Shield. You know, he ran an emergency room in Queens before he became a TV writer. You know, there are people who were cops that then created cop shows and they created great cop shows because they knew what it was like to be a cop. So, I have a lot of my friends, one of my friends is a very successful TV writer, he was a Marine, he came out of the Marines and then he was talking on message boards about Star Trek and the eventually broke into the industry and has a hugely successful career as a TV writer and showrunner because he was just interested in it and learned about an online.

I'm trying to think of a polite way of saying, what do you actually do? You know, you're the top guy, the executive behind the big desk as it were. Could you bring that alive for our listeners? You know, what does a typical week look like for you? What do you actually do day to day?

That's a great question. One of the interesting things about the job is it changes a lot, there's also a lot of different muscles you're exercising. So there's the creative side of it, where Shudder is run in a very specific way. We have our small acquisitions and development team, and there's really only four of us at the end of the day. We all talk about every film or think about buying every show we're thinking of making, we figure out what are the things that we want to make. What are the things that we think will do well for us, in TV, especially in film you're planning two or three years ahead. You know, if we put a TV show into production today, you wouldn't actually see that for a year. So we're always planning a couple of years out, and we're trying to figure out what we want to make, what will resonate with members, what will get people to subscribe and also look at what opportunities come up along the way. You know, we have a wonderful show called Dragula, which was a show that started somewhere else. And the creators had brought it to us to see if we wanted to continue it, which

debuted last month, a huge hit for us. We love the show. The creators are awesome. The Boulet brothers, that's a show that's sort of an opportunity that came our way. So you're both planning things out and developing things that you think you'll need while being open to every opportunity that comes along the way. There's also a whole business side of it where we're tracking how many subscribers we gained this week? How did we gain them? Are we spending the marketing money efficiently? There's a whole press side where we're talking about, well, what are the things that we have coming up that we want to announce in the press? How do we announce those in a way that will break through the clutter? What do we want to get out of that? I always sort of talk about that is the way that we're sort of telling the story of Shudder in public. So we're always talking about what's the story of Shudder. People don't know we have a hit movie, unless we tell them we have a hit movie. So we talk a lot about how can we talk about the things that we're doing in a way that people will want to hear, not in a way that we're just blabbering about ourselves and nobody wants to hear, so we have an amazing press team that we work with at AMC that helps with that. There's also a whole marketing angle. You know, when we get a film we have to cut a trailer for them. You have to get key art. A lot of times people are making their viewing decisions on a piece of key art and a trailer. So those are two things we spend, what many might consider an inordinate amount of time on, but really you can never spend enough time on it because those are the things when you bring up Shudder, whether you're subscribing directly or on Amazon, you see a bunch of thumbnails of movie posters. That's the very first thing that you see, that image is what's going to get you to click or not click at that moment. And then when you click on that, you're going to watch a trailer, will that trailer get you interested in it? Or when you read a news article about a show, what's the key art? What's the trailer? So there's a lot of time talking about how do we present our movies and series to people in the way that will get people most excited about them? Sharing our enthusiasm is a big part of the job. And there's also a lot of approving invoices. And when Covid hit, there was a lot of discussion around whether you had to introduce Covid protocols onto the set of all your movies and shows. So people had to wear masks, they had to be tested X amount of times per day, that adds to the budget. So can you still make the thing if we can't have a big crowd scene because you can't film crowds and we have to spend X amount of money on personal protective gear and Covid tests. What does that mean for the production? So, you have to kind of also make decisions on, can we continue this the way that we want to? Is there a way to solve this problem? Or is that a project we might just have to put on pause for now?

Last quick question then how do the fans get in touch? How can people go on your website, your social media to actually find out more about Shudder?

Yeah, well, the Shudder is very active on social media. So you can find us on Twitter @Shudder, S.H.U.D.D.E.R. And we respond to fans and talk with them all the time. We're also on Facebook. You can search for Shudder. We are on Instagram, you can search for Shudder, and there's actually a Reddit forum that fans created for Shudder, but we tend to hang out there to answer questions and listen to what they're doing. And we also talk directly to members ourselves. So you can find me on Twitter @CraigEngler. We have our character, Sam Zimmerman. If you search for Sam

Zimmerman, he is our VP programming and curates all the movies that are on Shudder. So you can always reach out to Sam and send us a suggestion.

Craig, that was a hugely interesting conversation. I'm starting to get some increased clarity now on what you do for a living and what your role is. And I can just say as a fan of Shudder, you're obviously doing a fantastic job, keep up the great work and thank you ever so much for your time.

Fantastic. Thanks for having us.