

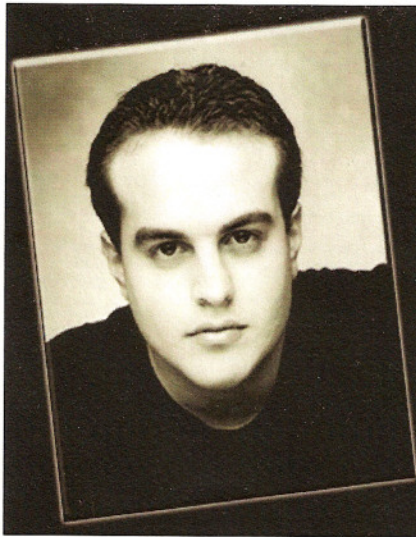
## Actor Interview:

**Express Lane to Fame: Talking With Horror Thespian Mike Lane**

By Owen Keehnen



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*Brooklyn born Mike Lane made a gutsy decision 5 years ago to chuck his Marketing Degree and go for the gold --- make that the blood red -- and hasn't bothered to look back since. In the years following he's made some formidable progress in the acting field -- mostly in the horror genre. Mr. Lane is most closely associated*

*with the world of Light & Dark Productions, where he also works periodically behind the scenes. His features for Light & Dark include the features 'The Tenement' in which he plays Jimmy Wayne Garrick, a man who believes he is turning into a werewolf (with Racks and Razors gore-gore gal Syn DeVil) and 'Fear of the Dark' (which features a deliciously visceral disembowelment scene). He has also appeared in such features as 'Urban Cannibal Holocaust', 'Permanent Scars', 'Cosmetic Commando', and 'Linger'. In addition he has several projects in the immediate offing.*

*It's a wonderful advantage of this site to showcase new talent and Mike Lane is someone you will definitely be hearing more from in the none-too-distant future.*

**Owen:** I was reading your bio how five years ago you changed gears and went from a marketing future into acting. It can be a pretty tough career. Have you ever regretted your decision?

**Mike:** Never. Even though I would be making a steady salary behind a desk, I would be miserable from regret and frustration for not pursuing my dream. Acting is what I should be doing and I'm glad I made that decision. And it's not like my degree is totally going to waste. I am marketing myself.

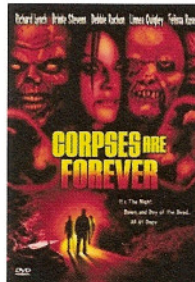
**Owen:** True. In 'Tenement' (which also features Racks and Razors fave Syn DeVil) you play Jimmy Wayne Garrick who after



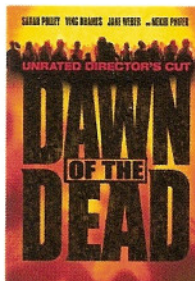
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being bitten by a wild animal becomes convinced he is turning into a werewolf. What was the most challenging part about the role?

**Mike:** -My naked butt shot. It was a chilly October night and I was completely naked except for a pair of fake ears and a plastic bag covering my private parts. We also shot the scene not too far from a busy street. Luckily I was performing in front of just the director Glen Baisley and Marion Nash, a nice old woman who was in the scene with me. Oh and in the too much information department, I shaved off all my body hair for the part since being hairless was a set up for a one line gag. So shaving got to be very time consuming. I found the role of Jimmy (which is probably my favorite role to date) more fun than challenging since I rarely had to hold back. He was an over the top character. I could just let everything go and be crazy which I enjoy doing. In acting I find "toning down" to be challenging sometimes. Syn DeVil was great to work with. The night of our scene was a night where everything that could go wrong did go wrong from starting to shoot at around 3am to the extras being drunk, to actors not showing up, etc. Syn handled her brief but memorable role like a true pro. Hopefully I'll be working with her again soon.

**Owen:** So do you feel what we fear is scarier than the real thing?

**Mike:** Sometimes. It depends on the situation. I do believe that our imagination can definitely be worse than what actually happens. An old trick in horror is sometimes to not show everything in every possible gory detail and leave it up to the audience's imagination since that is usually worse than anything a special effects artist can build.

**Owen:** Tell me about the disembowelment scene in '**Fear of the Dark**'. That's something you don't see everyday.

**Mike:** Speaking of not leaving anything up to the imagination – that scene was made to be purposefully long and overly drawn out. That was Glen's tongue and cheek comment on the ridiculousness of gratuitous gore scenes in horror. **Fear of the Dark** was actually almost banned from a local film festival due that scene's "shockingly realistic" vibe which is ironic since there is no way a human being can have that many intestines.

**Owen:** Both those films were done by Light and Dark Productions and I know you're also a creative consultant there. Can you tell me a little something about that production company?

**Mike:** While I made a suggestion here and there for **Fear of the Dark** and **The Tenement**, I really started to step up behind the scenes during the time between **The Tenement/Sin of the Father** (which were shot simultaneously) and **Fairview Falls**. Light and Dark has been around since 1999 and has released two full lengths

(**Fear of the Dark** and **The Tenement**), one short (The Family Tree) that can all be purchased at [www.lightanddark.net](http://www.lightanddark.net). We have another short (**No Trespassing 2: No Exit**) playing some festivals and screenings and two more full lengths in post (Sins of the Father and Fairview Falls). The movies all have a basically dark theme exploring the light, dark as well as the gray areas that dwell within everyone. We do our best to put out a good STORY first and then enhance it with the blood, guts and scream queens that lots of horror fans like. **The Tenement** is probably the most well known title since it landed a distribution deal with Brain Damage Films. I met Glen in the spring of 2000 when I auditioned and landed the role of Michael Jacobs in Fear of the Dark. We've been friends ever since.

**Owen:** What about Glen Baisley's (Light and Dark Productions) film vision coincides with your own?

**Mike:** Well first off Glen is the be all and end all of Light and Dark. He gets the last word and approval on everything. He's the big boss. Light and Dark is his playground and he is nice enough to let me play in it. That being said I am one of Glen's worst critics and I think he appreciates the constructive criticism because he knows I argue my views for the betterment of the movies. I have the right to argue with him and be brutally honest about why my vision would be the best for Light and Dark. Sometimes my arguments work, sometimes they don't but I always respect and go with his decision since it's his money being put into all the projects. Luckily, we do agree more often than not on the creative direction and Glen is always open to suggestion from anyone and everyone including actors, crew, fans etc. As long as the final decision is Glen's, he is a happy man. If I really feel strongly about a project that Glen doesn't agree with, I'll find a way to do it on my own. I'm sure Glen would be around to help if that ever comes to be.

**Owen:** In conjunction with Light and Dark I've heard you also attended your first horror convention. What was that first-time experience "on the other side of the table" like?

**Mike:** I actually attended my first horror convention as a fan I believe back in the early 1990's. It was a Fangoria Weekend of Horrors and I remember Clive Barker and Grandpa Al Lewis being there. Going to that convention opened my mind up to many alternative and underground cultures and styles. I did not attend another convention until Chiller Theatre in October 2000 to promote and hand out flyers for Fear of the Dark. We did not have a table then. I think at the Fangoria and Chiller conventions the



following year, Glen bought a table and we've had tables at both those conventions for the past five years. The first time being behind the table was great. I was helping to sell a movie that a bunch of other people and I busted our butts to make. And it was a damn good feeling when total strangers bought **Fear of the Dark** just based on the trailer playing on the monitor at the table and our passion to get our movie to as many people as possible.

**Mike:** I look forward to every convention because it's a chance for at least one more person to be exposed to our work.

**Owen:** Is your work behind the camera something to make connections to get more work in front of the camera or does production involvement on any level bring you the same amount of pleasure?

**Mike:** Right now I only work behind the camera for Light and Dark and that's with the understanding that my work behind the camera for them does not conflict with my acting schedule. I would not mind lending a behind the scenes hand in other company's project but only if we have the same understanding. Acting is my priority and if a company understands the sometimes last minute demands put upon an actor then I would be happy to help creatively in any way I can. I never approached the idea of working behind the camera to try and get work in front of the camera since I always prefer acting to anything else. So if I wanted to act in a project I would approach the project's powers that be as an actor first and foremost. I do find pleasure in a script I helped write or develop come to life in front of me or an idea that I had (whether being creative or business based) come to fruition but honestly not as much pleasure in a compliment on a performance from a fan or critic.

**Owen:** You also played Carter in the scare flick '**The Demon Shells**'. Can you tell me a little something about that project?

**Mike:** Unfortunately **The Demon Shells** will never be released. The director did not like the results of the movie after it was shot so he scrapped it. Luckily he liked my performance and I have worked with him on subsequent movies. Hopefully someday the movie will be revisited.

**Owen:** Boo, well then I want to hear about your work as a featured zombie in Insane-O-Rama's '**Last Rites**'.

**Mike:** I shoot with them this Friday so as soon as I find out, you'll find out. I've hung out with the Insane-O-Rama crew a few times at the horror conventions and they are good people.

Also, after reading the script for **Last Rites** I can tell you that it is 100 times better than **Strange Things Happen at Sundown**. So if you liked **Strange Things**, you will absolutely LOVE **Last Rites**.

**Owen:** So which is the most frightening to you and why - werewolves, witches, zombies, vampires, psychos, aliens, or creatures?

**Mike:** Psychos because they really exist. Just watch the news.

**Owen:** As someone dedicated to the enhancement of the horror genre what are your favorite fright movies?

**Mike:** The George A. Romero zombie movies (including **Land of the Dead**) are hands down some of my favorites. What are so great about them are not only the awesome looking effects and gore, but the underlying social commentary that Romero weaves into his stories. I also find **The Exorcist**, **Evil Dead**, **A Nightmare on Elm Street** and Kubrick's **The Shining** to be some of the scariest movies ever made. They gave me nightmares when I was a kid. For roller coaster like thrills that make you jump out of your seat, **Aliens** and **Scream** definitely come to mind.

**Owen:** What projects do you have lined up in the near future?

**Mike:** I just finished doing commentary for the Light and Dark short **No Trespassing 2: No Exit** with Glen and Diana Baisley and I did some overdubs for an upcoming director's cut of **Fear of the Dark**

I start acting in a **Star Wars** fan film (I am a HUGE **Star Wars** fan) very soon. That should be fun. I get to fly a starship and fire a blaster. How cool is that? And coincidentally the director of the fan film was a fan of **Fear of the Dark** who I met and talked to at the different horror conventions over the years. Before my audition he e-mailed me and said that he knew me. I immediately recognized him once I saw his picture. Good thing we always got along at the conventions.

I have a few indie films lined up but I don't want to announce them until all the funding comes into place and all the i's are dotted and t's are crossed contractually. Hopefully they will all be made but I have learned to hope for the best but expect the worst. I act regularly in industrials (training videos) for RuMe Interactive and Learn It Solutions based on Long Island . Glen and I are also in the preliminary stages of writing Light and Dark's next feature length

movie as well as working on the postproduction dealings for Sins of the Father and Fairview Falls. And I'm sure to let off some steam, Light and Dark will probably film some shorts, DVD extras and whatever else comes to mind. And finally, when I'm not acting, I spend my time going on auditions, looking for more acting work by sifting through the multitude of casting pages on the Internet, always promoting that I'm an actor to almost everyone I meet and trying to have a good social life as well. Luckily, I have been keeping busy.

Owen: What scares you in real life?

Mike: Falling asleep while driving. There have been many times where I've had to pull over and either stretch or take a nap in my truck. For some reason it's almost impossible to try to stay awake if I'm tired while driving. Luckily I haven't completely fallen asleep and driven off a mountain or into oncoming traffic. Thanks for the interview (you got yourself a damn good website) and don't forget to check out my website at [www.lightanddark.net/MikeLane.htm](http://www.lightanddark.net/MikeLane.htm).

Owen: Will do, thanks Mike. And all the best with your career.