

Building 'The Guild'

Felicia Day reflects on creating the award-winning Web series and bringing it to DVD

By John Latchem

TALENT TALK

Actress Felicia Day is no stranger to the world of fan-boy entertainment. She's played a vampire slayer on "Buffy," had her head cut open on "House," and inspired the lust of both a superhero and a supervillain in "Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog."

Since 2007, Day's primary exposure to that cultish crowd has taken the form of her Web series "The Guild" (WatchTheGuild.com), which she created to channel her obsession with online role-playing video games.

"It was the first thing I'd ever written," Day said. "I wrote it as a half-hour television pilot. When I showed it to people, they said there was some funny stuff, but they didn't understand half of it."

Then Day showed it to her friend Kim Evey, who had experience producing viral videos, and she suggested making it for online distribution. "The Guild" has since garnered more than 50 million total views and in 2009 collected Streamy Awards for best comedy Web series, best actress for Day and best ensemble cast.

Day stars as Codex, a wallflower who turns to online gaming to build confidence. She is a member of The Knights of Good, a guild of gamers who aid each other in online quests. The cast includes Jeff Lewis as Vork, Sandeep Parikh as Zaboo, Amy Okuda as Tinkerballa, Vincent Caso as Bladezz and Robin Thorsen as Clara.

The third season, which New Video NYC releases on DVD May 25 at \$14.95, finds The Knights of Good on the verge of breaking up under the weight of personal issues and the pressures of a rival guild, the Axis of

Anarchy. The Axis leader is played by Wil Wheaton, best known as Wesley Crusher on "Star Trek: The Next Generation" and most recently as a devious caricature of himself on "The Big Bang Theory."

The third-season DVD includes Knights of Good applicant fan videos, a Halloween episode, a "Do

You Want to Date My Avatar" music video, a "How to Build Vork's Sword" featurette, commentary with the cast and crew, Axis of Anarchy interviews, gag reels and a panel discussion with Day and her creative team in which they discuss how anyone can make

their own Web series.

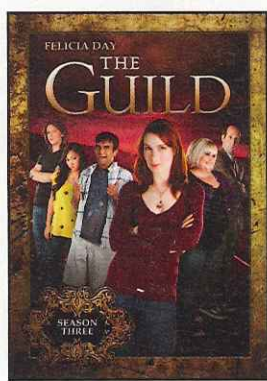
"The ability to release it yourself is always there," Day said. "The big thing to remember with Web content is that 90% of the work is done after you finish producing and editing it. It's so hard to motivate an audience to watch."

Daysaidshespendseveralmonths preparing the script for a season, which is then modified during a read-through with the cast. Each season is filmed over the course of two weeks, with the fourth season due this summer.

Day said season four will pick up where the third season left off but should be more lighthearted and less stressful on the characters. She also hopes to pair off different characters in combinations not seen before.

"It's hard not to write more because all the actors are so wonderful," Day said.

Read more at homemediamagazine.com/Felicia-Day-Guild-19299



Kevin Costner and Ivana Baquero in *The New Daughter*

'New Daughter' Brings Baquero to U.S. Shores

By Billy Gil

The New Daughter, a horror-thriller hitting disc May 18 from Anchor Bay Entertainment, represents two debuts: the first directorial outing of writer Luis Berdejo of acclaimed Spanish horror film *[REC]*, and the English-language debut of *Pan's Labyrinth*'s young star, Ivana Baquero.

"I've been studying in an American school since I was 3, and I had the chance to finally go there and live the American experience," Baquero said of the three months of filming in South Carolina. "I found no major challenges, it was really enjoyable."

The Spanish-flavored horror film (see review, page 20) has hints of magical realism intertwined with a traditional American horror film. Baquero plays a young teen who begins exhibiting stranger and stranger behavior when her now-single father (Kevin Costner) moves her and her brother (Gattlin Griffith) to a remote house in a rural town.

A lot of the heavy lifting acting-wise in the film falls on Baquero, but she said Costner was a big help.

"Kevin is really generous as an actor, always there helping you, and whenever I was confused or wasn't sure what to do, he's always there," Baquero said. "He always helped Gattlin and me, giving technical

advice such as 'move to the left so the camera could see both of you.'"

Baquero said she loves doing fantasy and horror films, citing *Pathfinder* and *The Lord of the Rings* as recent favorites, but wants to move into other genres. Her next film, *Keeper of the Pinstripes*, is a family film. She also understands that being a child actor means long hours of both working and studying to keep up with her classmates back in Barcelona, but the Goya Award-winning 15-year-old seems more confident than some actors three times her age.

"It gets hard sometimes, but I always have a tutor when I'm filming, so I'm always updated with my classmates," she said of studying English, Spanish and Catalan while filming. "I don't really have a hard time, so I always catch up pretty easily. It gets sometimes kind of tiring because you have to film and study, but it's a consequence of being a child actor that I'm totally willing to accept. It's a pretty smooth process."

The New Daughter DVD is listed at \$29.97 and the Blu-ray at \$34.98. Both have deleted scenes, a commentary with Berdejo and a behind-the-scenes featurette. Read an interview with director Luis Berdejo at homemediamagazine.com/indiefile-new-daughter.

WARNER BOWS NEW TCM CLASSIC FILM SETS

By Billy Gil

CLASSIC Warner Home Video is releasing two new four-title DVD sets from its "TCM Greatest Classic Films Collection" Aug. 3 (order date Sept. 7) at \$27.92 each.

Gangsters includes *High Sierra* (1941), starring Humphrey Bogart and Ida Lupino; *Little Caesar* (1930), loosely based on Al Capone; *The Public Enemy* (1931), starring James Cagney; and *White Heat* (1949), also starring Cagney.

Hammer Horror includes cult films from Hammer Film Productions, founded in 1934 and known for its gothic horror films. The set has *Horror of Dracula* (1958), *Dracula Has Risen From the Grave* (1969), *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957) and *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed!*



FACTORY 25 TO RELEASE 7 TITLES ON DVD AND VINYL THROUGH 2010

By Billy Gil

Indie film and vinyl LP label Factory 25 will release seven titles between June and October, starting with *Altamont Now* on DVD and digital download July 27 at \$24.95.

Altamont Now is a satire of modern alternative youth culture and how it borrows its rebellion from the past, in the vein of the Rolling Stones documentary *Gimme Shelter*. In the 2008 film based on a late-1990s play, members of an indie rock band sequester themselves in an abandoned nuclear silo below ground, on the 30th anniversary of the infamous Altamont concert, only to be infiltrated by a journalist who must endure their endless railings against "the man."

The DVD includes a commentary, audio soundtrack of the songs performed in the movie by Enduro with Richard Havoc and Karen Kennedy, deleted and extended scenes (including the original ending), a behind-the-scenes featurette on the actual missile silo used in the film, a short film and more.

Releases to follow from Factory 25 are *Until the Light Takes Us*, *Brock & Co.*, *right: Good Times Will Never Be the Same*, *Rio Breaks*, *Sir Henry at Rollins End*, *You Won't Miss Me*, *Wah Do Dem* and *Make Out With Violence*.

