

DECLARE YOUR INDEPENDENCE!

INDIE SLATE

Real Filmmakers. "Reel" Life. #43 Now in our 10th Year!

147
PRODUCTIONS
FIND JOBS!
FIND CLINETS!
FIND PROJECTS!

FESTIVAL PROGRAMMERS FESS UP!

Get Insider Advice

GEAR

Easyrig, XL2 Lenses
LightWave

PLUS

SEEKING DISTRIBUTION?
Tips on leveraging the odds!
24p SHOOTING & POST, Pt 3
TRUE TALES of REEL LIFE
BRACELET OF BORDEAUX, REEKER,
AMONG BROTHERS, FREEDOM STATE,
INTERNATIONALLY SPEAKING
FROM THE PRO FILE:
JOAN CHURCHILL



www.indieslate.com

#43 \$4.95US \$6.90CAN

43 >

0 50644 92513 9

Among Brothers

A Chilling, fact-based debut

A well-paced script from a chilling, based-in-truth story is at the heart of *Among Brothers*, a debut feature from writer-producer-director John Schwert. Professional cinematography, strong acting by the leads, a haunting score and good use of locations all belie Schwert's ultra-low budget. It's a well-crafted and absorbing indie movie that draws you into the mystery of an as yet unsolved murder. —Editor

By John Schwert

On November 9, 1994, Jennifer Morgan, a senior at Frances Marion College in South Carolina, was found dead in her burned down apartment. The police told her family that it appeared to be an accident. Two days later, her autopsy revealed that there was no presence of smoke in Jennifer's lungs. She was dead before the fire started. Someone had killed her and tried to cover it up.

After Jennifer's death, her brother, Thomas A. Morgan, spent ten years attempting to find out what really happened to her. What Tom Morgan discovered is reflected in an original story that he wrote called *Brothers*.

In 2004, John Schwert met Tom at a mutual friend's housewarming party. The dust that had gathered on the cover of *Brothers* was brushed off and Schwert, blown away by the profound nature of the story, took a crack at getting it made into a feature length motion picture.

Having recently completed a few short films and his first producing gig, the self-taught Schwert left his well-paying corporate job in the bank marketing and advertising world, took a second mortgage on his house and began production on *Among Brothers*, an adaptation of Tom Morgan's original story with fictionalized names.

Having worked with Lauren Schneider (*Wrestling, The Rest of Your Life*) on another movie, Schwert offered her the part as Jennifer and she immediately accepted. Through a short list of New York theatre actors, Matt Mercer was cast as Ethan and Corey Cicci was cast as Miles, the two male leads. The remainder of the actors and players were cast through a series of open casting calls in North Carolina.

With a limited budget, Schwert called on many friends, other filmmakers and the Charlotte, NC community to rally behind



Among Brothers, to get it produced for \$32,819 of his own money. The motion picture was shot mostly on digital video with the Panasonic DVX-100A, in the advanced 24p setting. A few scenes were shot using 16mm Kodak film stock.

Given the nature of the subject matter of *Among Brothers*, the portion of the story taking place prior to the murder was shot elegantly, on a dolly, tripod and with steady jib work. Seasoned director of photography Brad Hoover captured the remainder of the story using hand-held techniques and non-steady jib work.

Hoover, along with Silver Hammer Studios and Hollywood Rentals, contributed his equipment for the 24 days of production in September 2004. Once into post production, Schwert relied on Fred Story and his music and sound design company, Concentrix, to score, mix and master the sound.

The 16 Charlotte area locations used in production were secured through a continuous beg, borrow and beg some more process. Crown Golf Center, The Great Aunt Stella Center, The Rotunda Building, The Extravaganza Depot, The Corner Pub and Queens University were all contributors to *Among Brothers*, along with Limerick Studios and Tentmakers Entertainment.

Among Brothers premiered at the Palm Beach International Film Festival in April 2005, played the following week at Worldfest Houston, and went on to screen at 12 more film festivals. Currently, *Among Brothers* is seeking distribution while it plays in the spring of 2006 at a variety of upcoming festivals.

For more on this based-on-actual-events motion picture, go to 4wproductions.com, or contact Schwert at (704) 373-8282.



Director John Schwert (L) with cast

