



- [About Slackerwood](#)
- [Contributors](#)
- [Venue guide](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [Archive by category](#)
- [Archive by month](#)
- [Contact](#)

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[Home](#) » [Blogs](#) » [Jordan Gass-Poore's blog](#)

'You're Next' Cast at Alamo Slaughter

By [Jordan Gass-Poore](#) on August 19, 2013 - 2:00pm in [Alamo Drafthouse](#) | [Celebrity Sightings](#)



The Dwight Tilley Band's 1977 single "Looking For The Magic" played on repeat in my mind after last Monday's preview screening at Alamo Drafthouse Slaughter of the horror flick *You're Next*, which first screened locally at Fantastic Fest 2011. It was life imitating art because the song played repeatedly throughout the movie. I even felt kind of bad that I was jammin' out to the song in my head while characters were being slaughtered left and right on screen.

I had to work to shake myself out of the power-pop stupor when two of the film's leads, [Barbara Crampton](#) (*Re-Animator*) and [A.J. Bowen](#) (*A Horrible Way to Die* and *Austinite* Emily Hagins' *Grow Up*, *Tony Phillips*) appeared on stage after the movie to discuss experiences on set and their feelings about each other, whiskey (thanks A.J. for sharing) and the film's Aug. 23 theatrical release. Some members of the large audience were wearing fox, tiger and lamb masks freakishly similar to those worn by the film's murderers.



The event, which promoted this year's Fantastic Fest with an obstacle course and festival VIP badge winner before the screening, was interesting to me because Crampton's role as Megan in *Re-Animator* changed my elementary school experience. I first saw the H.P. Lovecraft film adaptation on the Syfy channel (before the channel's stupid name change) when I was about eight years old. The scene fondly called "head giving head" led to a conversation I don't think many moms have with their children. Ever. My curiosity was piqued, even though Syfy channel attempted to blur the character of Dr. Carl Hill's head out of the scene. Thank you, Barbara, for that.

Now I'm all flustered.

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There's nothing quite as risqué in *You're Next*. Plenty of "shitbags," though, to quote Bowen, describing his character Crispian. He says when the film's writer **Simon Barrett** (who's behind the film's tiger mask) and director **Adam Wingard** initially sent him the script, he had some reservations about Crispian's personality, not to mention the spelling of the character's name.

"When they sent me the script I was like, 'I'm not feeling Crispian.' Last time around I was the shitbag (in Barrett's and Wingard's *A Horrible Way to Die*) and choked a lot of women out," Bowen says.

I'm not going to say if Bowen "choked any women out" in *You're Next*, but I agree with him -- he was "emasculated" by filmmaker-actor **Joe Swanberg** (who collaborated with Barrett on *V/H/S*) on film.

Maybe if Bowen would have gotten the opportunity he wanted to play Erin, Crispian's girlfriend -- who then would have either been his boyfriend or changed sex -- he wouldn't have been emasculated or blamed whiskey on his self-confessed weight gain during the film's production. Personally, I thought Bowen's facial hair and body shape looked good in the film, even though he is now noticeably thinner and clean shaven.

"Before we had **Sharni [Vinson]**, who plays Erin, I was trying to make this pitch to them: 'I could see Erin being a man, you just change the way Erin is spelled,'" says Bowen. "... I tried for about two weeks to convince them to let me play Erin."

And did I mention Bowen says he drank a lot of whiskey? He recalled the first time he met Crampton before the cast was going to have dinner, where he got "shitfaced" and ran behind her and out the restaurant's door. He says she came outside after him and asked him how old he was. The 31-year-old replied, to which she supposedly said, "I guess you could be my son."

It's okay though because according to Crampton "everybody has a shitbag in their family." I know I do. And it's this family dynamic that she and Bowen credit to the success of *You're Next* and set it apart from a traditional slasher or horror-comedy flick.

Texas filmmaker-actor **Amy Seimetz** co-stars as Bowen's sister and Crampton's daughter, and Fantastic Fest alum **Ti West** (*The House of the Devil*) makes an appearance as Seimetz's film-school boyfriend. A pivotal scene in *You're Next* includes the couple joining the family for what Bowen says was a semi "improvisational" dinner (the one that led to Swanberg emasculating him).

Seimetz's role was also one of the reasons why Bowen says the film was shot almost entirely in order about two years ago.

Yes, two years ago.

You're Next premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival 2011, where Crampton remembers being the last person to walk out of the theater because she had high heels on and overhearing peoples' phone conversations about how they loved the movie and encouraged others to purchase the distribution rights.

It was a very eye-opening experience for Crampton because this is her first film since retiring from acting.

She landed the role of Aubrey after Barrett ran into filmmaker Stuart Gordon at Fantastic Fest 2010, which Bowen considers to be his favorite film festival. Gordon and Crampton collaborated on a number of movies, including *Re-Animator*, which screened at the festival.

"I actually didn't think I'd ever work again and I was okay with that," says Crampton., who lives outside San Francisco with her husband and two kids. "I was helping with the garden program at my kids' school."

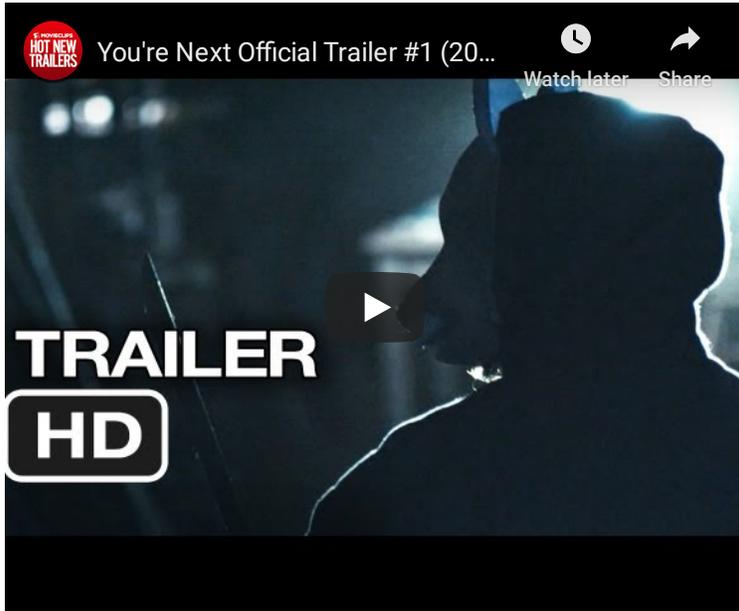
A few weeks after the Toronto International Film Festival, Crampton says Lionsgate acquired distribution rights to the film ... but delayed the theatrical release.

"Then we all got depressed," she says, adding that it would have been okay if it had gone straight to DVD.

But last year the cast and crew of *You're Next* was told that it would finally be released theatrically in 2013. In addition, a trailer for the movie ran during the commercials for the *Breaking Bad* season premiere this year.

"It was a 'holy f*ck' moment," recalls Bowen. "I highly recommend having one of those."

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