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## AFF 2011 Interview: 'Restive'

By [Jordan Gass-Poore](#) on November 2, 2011 - 1:30pm in

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A mother's challenge to her abusive husband sends her family into an unsettling journey through the woods in Austin-based first-time filmmaker [Jeremiah Jones](#)'s feature film *Restive*. The movie screened to a sold-out audience the first night of [AFF](#). Jones and lead actress [Marianna Palka](#) (pictured above) were there too.

A lot has changed for writer/director Jones, who graduated from The University of Texas at Austin where he was a three-year football letterman.

How did Jones transition from football to filmmaking? "It might sound odd, but the skill sets are the same," he said. "Directing is coaching, and casting is recruiting. You try to get everyone on the same page and give them the support that they need to get to a goal. You treat them like family."

Number 19 has swerved and dodged adversity to have *Restive* premiere at the 2011 [Cinequest Film Festival](#), an annual independent film festival in San Jose. After watching *Restive* for the first time on screen at Cinequest, he was surprised by the tone and mood of the finished movie.

"There was a dark and intense moment in the film where I looked at my wife and she said, 'Don't look at me, you made it,'" Jones said. "Anybody that watches the movie, it's kind of a creepy, dark, intense movie; they'd think I should be this weird, creepy guy." But he notes that he's from an "amazing, loving" family and has never seen his parents argue.

The script for *Restive* took Jones about a year to write, and was filmed on location for 18 days in Crawford, Texas. Jones chose to film in his childhood town because he knew he "would probably have the most favors there." He said the townspeople fed the 40 members of the cast and crew three free meals a day during filming.

"We wouldn't have been able to make the movie without the (Crawford) community," Jones said.

The feature film was produced by Jones's and his wife's company [Enemyhouse](#). Jones said his wife is business savvy -- the partnership works well because she is there to "clean up (his) messes."

The most grueling part of making *Restive* was the casting process, Jones said. He didn't hire a casting director because he wanted to learn the process himself. He was looking for actors who had produced "great" work but were on the edge of becoming well-known. So Jones started calling agents.

"When you call an agent they'll ask you two things: what have you done and how much money do you have? I don't have any money and I haven't done much," Jones said.

Lead actress Palka is from Scotland, but plays a Texan woman in *Restive*. Why would Jones cast a Scottish actress as a Texan? Palka has some theories.

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"Jeremiah has really good instincts, he can see good talent really clearly," she said. "I was so impressed by the male cast because they were amazing actors. Jeremiah knows what he's doing with that, he has great instincts about people and has good people around him.

"He and his wife have a great family. There was something about it that felt like a family vacation, it didnt feel like making a movie," Palka added.

Jones loved working with the cast he'd assembled not only from Texas, but New York and Scotland, he said. "That's the great thing about filmmaking -- you have the ability to meet amazing people all over. There is no boundary. For me personally, it's all about the thrill of making a movie: the movie secondary, the people are first."

"Jeremiah made us feel as a cast that we could do whatever we wanted and make it the best that we could be," Palka said. "It felt like we had free rein to go the distance to the best."

Jones's next project is another feature film, *Precursor*. "It's about a man who has insomnia," he explained. "He goes to see several specialists. One specialist runs a brainwaves test and finds out his brainwave frequency is at REM sleep. There's a chance that the man is dreaming that he has insomnia."

*Restive* was shot in Crawford, and post-production work was done in Austin by Stuck On On. Visit the movie's [website](#) or [Facebook page](#) for more information about upcoming screenings.

*Debbie Cerda* and *Jette Kernion* also contributed to this article.

[Photo credit: *Debbie Cerda*. All rights reserved.]