

The Film Connection – Chapter Six

1.) What is one of the most important qualities in a successful writer/director?

To be successful writer/director, one must be able to take critique and keep his or her ego in check. A good writer/director knows that they need to be open-minded and willing to learn and improve constantly. Therefore, instead of believing his/her judgment is always right, as a writer/director, he/she must be able to criticize him/herself and seek ways to become better.

2.) What do Highlander 2 and Blade Trinity have in common? How were they creative problems solved? How would you have attempted to solve the creative differences on set?

Both Highlander 2 and Blade: Trinity were disastrous sequels that were great disappointments for those who enjoyed the previous films. One of the primary reasons for these flops were that the productions underwent a considerable amount of discord between lead actor and director, which translated to the actors' faces. However, while Blade: Trinity resulted in an awful end for the franchise, director Russell Mulcahy redeemed himself by redoing Highlander 2.

My approach with these difficult circumstances would have been to listen and understand both opposing sides and find a way to come to an agreement. Wesley Snipes might have felt that Blade: Trinity was turning out to be a stereotypical black film under David Goyer's direction, which goes against the reason why the Blade franchise was so successful—it was not a stereotypical black film. Maybe David Goyer couldn't see how some of his choices, such as having a black co-star wear a shirt that said "Garbage" on it, could come across as degrading. In order to solve Goyer's and Snipes' creative differences, they would have to understand each other and both have the same mission in mind—to create another non-stereotypical black film that audiences could enjoy. But if David Goyer wasn't the type of person who respected African Americans, maybe he'd have to be replaced by a different director who better understood the mission of the film, resulting in a better sequel to the Blade trilogy.

3.) What is so unique about Highlander: The Renegade Cut?

Highlander 2: The Renegade Cut was recreated by director Russell Mulcahy from new footage as well as old footage from the last Highlander 2 film. Christopher Lambert had creative differences with the director throughout the last film, resulting in a confused mess. However, when he saw Mulcahy's attempt to redeem himself, he liked the new concept and returned to make another film with him. In consequence, Highlander 2: The Renegade Cut served as a comeback for both Lambert and Mulcahy, and the franchise ended on a good note.

4.) What lessons can be learned from the tumultuous production of Highlander 2 and Blade Trinity?

Both directors and actors alike should keep in mind that in order for a production to be successful, everyone in the production must be looking to reach the same goal. If a director doesn't share the same mission as his/her cast or crew, it doesn't matter if he/she is a big household name. Discord doesn't create a film. Harmony does.

5.) Why is being able to take criticism an important attribute of any filmmaker?

The ability to take criticism is crucial in filmmaking, since a filmmaker must be able to collaborate with others and work with a team, and teammates often disagree and find ways to compromise. It takes many people to create a film, and if a filmmaker isn't willing to work with others, he/she shouldn't be in the film business.