

EP. 1504: FILMMAKER RUSSELL EMANUEL (STAYCATION)

JUNE 1, 2025

STAYCATION, 93min., USA

Directed by Russell Emanuel

How is the world affected by a catastrophic event? Everyday people live through a government mandated quarantine during a global pandemic while desperate scientists race to find a cure before it's too late.

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<https://www.instagram.com/russem31/> (<https://www.instagram.com/russem31/>)

Get to know the filmmaker:

What motivated you to make this film?

It was the Covid Pandemic. Everything was shut down so my late filmmaking partner Emile Haris (who unfortunately passed away during post-production in July 2023) and I went about to create a film about a pandemic against what seemed insurmountable odds (nothing was open).

From the idea to the finished product, how long did it take for you to make this film?

Emile Haris and I started with a short film called "Routine" which we filmed in April 2020 at the start of the pandemic when even SAG-AFTRA was shut down and we couldn't go outside. So he and I took it upon ourselves to film a 5-minute proof of concept prequel called "Routine" at my condo with a non-SAG-AFTRA actress Paige Laree Poucel and we hired an amazing DC/Marvel Comics Artist Dave Beaty to "draw" the third act which took place outside and hired two amazing voice actors Bill Victor Arucan and Alan Courtright. Due to the success of this film, along with head executive producer Bill Victor Arucan (who reprised his role of 'Rob Peterson' from "Routine" and the Peterson name itself is a running gag in all my 6 feature films), we successfully raised the money to do "Staycation" and started filming in November 2024 when SAG-AFTRA was re-opened but with severe Covid restrictions. We then filmed piecemeal over 2 years, finally completing shooting in November 2022.

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Matthew Toffolo

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