

Summer Glau Tells io9 About Her New Robot Best Friend, Jeff 1000

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Summer Glau played one of our favorite robots in Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles. Now she's starring in a new webseries, Jeff 1000, about a former industrial robot who wants to break into acting. Here's your exclusive first look at the trailer. Plus Glau told us what she would have done in T:SCC season three.

As you can see from the trailer, Jeff 1000 is a pretty tongue-in-cheek, goofy series about a robot who leaves his factory job to go to Hollywood and become an actor. And Glau plays a version of herself, as an actor who becomes Jeff's best friend. We've seen the series, which debuts on Dec. 15, and it's got some pretty hilarious moments featuring a giant robot trying to fit in with Los Angeles scenester life. It's created by Michael Karnow (Alphas).

"I had a little experience with robots myself," says Glau, "so I thought it would be fun to experience this from a different angle." She was excited to work with Karnow again, and also with director Nick Copus (who directed a ton of episodes of Arrow, Alphas and other shows that Glau's been on.)

"These digital shorts that we did kind of put Jeff and I into different scenarios that actors might be in every day," says Glau. "On set, off set, learning lines, talking about our careers. I found it really, really funny."

And the robot is completely real and practical, "all nine feet of him," so filming scenes with this huge robot was a logistical challenge. They filmed pretty much the whole thing in one day, and at the end, Glau felt attached to him, "my scene partner," and wanted to do a lot more with him. She hopes they film more, because "there's a lot more story to tell."

The trailer above hints that there's something more sinister going on with Jeff's acting career — but all Glau will say is that "Jeff is a mysterious character, and he has a cute backstory about how he came to Los Angeles, but the truth may be darker." In the series, "I'm his closest L.A. friend, and I'm helping him with his career, and I'm trusting him with all my personal life stories. I'm getting closer and closer to him, and it might turn out that he's a more dangerous person than I thought. But that's only hinted at."

The series aims to talk about the fact that, especially in places like L.A., "we're communicating more with our technology than we are with each other," says Glau. "We feel that is a true danger for many different reasons." With everybody bonded to their iPhones, she thought it was funny that her character bonds with this nine-foot robot... and then is sad when L.A. changes him."Jameron" shippers did not surprise her

When Glau found out that a ton of fans were invested in a romantic relationship between John Connor and her Terminator character Cameron, she wasn't surprised at all.

"It didn't surprise me, because it was such an important driving force for me, behind my character development," says Glau of the "Jameron" shippers and fanfic writers.

"When I first signed on to do Sarah Connor, I was really nervous because I wanted to connect to this robot, and I wanted to understand her," adds Glau. "I wanted to feel close to her, so I could embody her and make people connect to her and make people understand her."

And in the end, "it was one of the most rewarding acting experiences anybody could ask for," exploring how Cameron can have relationships with people. "She can't really love John, because she's not a human. But her relationship to her purpose, her existence, was protecting him — and it kind of manifested in this obsession for him. And the longer I played that character, the more complex the expression became, and I found it really, really moving." Adds Glau, "Even though she was a robot, I was able to find vulnerability and relatability to her."

If the show had gotten a third season, Glau says it would have been "amazing," as they explored the future and her own character's past. "I was going to be doing both Cameron and [her human inspiration] Allison. I was going to be balancing characters a lot more, and I thought that was going to be fabulous. I wanted to spend more time explaining Alison's piece of the story, and why Cameron was based on her." There was a very specific reason "why Cameron was built to look like this particular human."

"I always wondered, for Lena and Thomas, when we were doing Sarah Connor," what it was like acting opposite a robot, says Glau. "I found, when we were shooting Jeff 1000, it was actually really inspiring and fun and playful and something different to work with than any other scene partner."

As for Glau's other recent role, Isabel on Arrow, she says that "anybody can come back from the dead on Arrow." At the same time, she kept being surprised her character kept coming back as long as she did. "I was a bad, bad girl," she says. "It's really fun to be evil."

Taken from io9's website:

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