

1-on-1 With Summer Glau & James Middleton of Sarah Connor Chronicles

February 15, 2008, by Cynthia

On Sunday, I had a chance to sit down with the good people of The Sarah Connor Chronicles for a little 1-on-1 time. We caught up in the secret, upstairs green room (which isn't green) at the Shrine Auditorium which plays host to the Los Angeles Comic Book and Science Fiction Convention.

When I arrived, Summer Glau and James Middleton were sitting behind a long table full of posters they had just autographed. I took my seat across from Summer and was immediately struck by what a classic beauty she is. She's no slouch on screen, but in person this girl just glows! I started off by asking her our contest question and she gave it a great deal of thought before answering. She was so demure and soft spoken, it's hard to imagine this is the same girl I saw beat the heck out of a Terminator twice her size on the show last week.

Since she brought up the idea of "shaping America's youth", I asked her to speak to the violence, particularly the violence aimed at teens on Sarah Connor.

Summer: Obviously the story has very high stakes, it's about the biggest war humanity has ever faced, so I think violence is inevitable but we always do it with purpose," said Summer. "I think that our violence is never gratuitous and I completely just Josh(Friedman)'s judgment on how much violence we use."

Next I slid down a chair to catch up with James Middleton. He started off by giving me a little insight on the ups and downs of working with a known franchise such as The Terminator.

James: "There are challenges with working with a franchise like this in any medium, be it animation or film or tv," said Middleton. "People cherish the franchise and they have great expectations for any new piece of work that comes from the franchise. There are naturally some challenges to meet those expectations. But at the same time, I never approached it from a standpoint of being worried about it because I love the franchise so much. I approach it from a standpoint of great excitement. It's been a great opportunity for all of the producers to work on this very fertile material. And Josh Friedman has done the best work of his life. This series has allowed him to explore questions and issues that are completely unique to him."

And when you inherit a franchise such as Terminator, you also inherit a very passionate fan base!

James : "We screened this pilot for the fans at Comic Con and it was one of the best moments of my professional life. It's was a rapturous response. We had comment after comment from fans saying it lived up to the promise of the franchise. We also did smaller screenings such as at Golden Apple comic book store where we got a fantastic response. I think fans are embracing our show for what it is. They're embracing our cast and Lena as the new Sarah Connor and Josh's interpretation of it."

But how can a weekly TV series sustain the kind of action and suspense that is associated with the Terminator films? Middleton explains that it's not always going to be about a Terminator chasing after Sarah and her son.

James: "Without giving away anything we don't want to surprise and entertain you with, what Sarah finds when she comes to our time is that the conspiracy perpetrated by Skynet is much more vast than she ever imagined. It's not just about a Terminator being

sent back from the future to target her son. It's a vast conspiracy and she's bitten off more than she can chew. We'll also find there are threats provided by mankind himself, a lot of things that lead to the invention of Skynet are the failures of mankind."

Personally, I think it's this "human" side of the Sarah Connor Chronicles that draws you in episode after episode. The action is great, the stunts are huge and the special effects are nifty -- but in the end, it's watching John struggle to keep hidden when he wants to bust out while Sarah walks that fine line between protecting and smothering her son that really hits home. Oh, and watching Cameron imitate human behavior is both funny and poignant.

If you had the power, what would you do RIGHT NOW in order to create a better world in the future?

Summer: "This may sound cheesy, but I guess I would change broken homes. I'd like to see families stay together. There are so many reasons for why it's happening today, but it's rampant and it really is shaping our youth today. So I guess if I could think of one thing that I could change, that would be it."

Taken from tvoftheabsurd's website:

<http://tvoftheabsurd.com/2008/02/15/1-on-1-with-summer-glau-james-middleton-of-sarah-connor-chronicles/>