Written by Ginny Grimsley
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*Creator of 'Halloween' Film Franchise Discusses Why We Love Horror*

Irwin Yablans, creator of the "Halloween" films that forever changed the genre, says the answer's easy.

"When done right, a horror movie evokes an involuntary response involving fear, excitement, repulsion and fascination," says Yablans, ( www.irwinyablans.com ), author of the new memoir, *The Man Who Created Halloween* . In it, he details his rise as a successful independent producer, sales chief for Paramount Pictures and head of Orion Pictures. His masked creepster Michael Myers, who debuted in 1978, spawned a wave of iconic horror characters, and a new way to do business in Hollywood.

"Too many commentators focus on the cost of making a film, and how much the lead actors were paid," he says. "But, from a producer's point of view, the most important money question is: Is our movie worth the $10 ticket price?"

Yablans shares his views on why we love to be horrified:

• **Universal appeal:** Horror will always tantalize the masses because it touches a visceral emotional response within *everyone* – unlike other genres. Not everyone finds the same things funny, for example, but just about everyone finds the same things scary, he says. "Horror connects on that most fundamental level. A truly frightening boogieman, a likeable protagonist and sympathetic victims puts audiences right in the shoes of the characters being chased," he says.

• **The difference between horror and horrible, and fan loyalty:** As a boy, Yablans grew up in a poor tenement in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, listening to radio shows that relied on "theater of the mind" narratives, which captured the imaginations of listeners. He used this approach with the Halloween film series. "Too many of today's horror films rely on blood and guts to coax gross-out responses from audiences," Yablans says. " 'Halloween' was successful, in large part, because it played more on the mind, where fear lives." Horror fans tend to give new movies the benefit of the doubt, and if the first one is good, then they'll return for parts 2 and 3, he says.

• **Cost-effective:** Most of the greatest horror film franchises began with modest budgets, including “Night of the Living Dead,” $114,000; the first “Halloween,” $320,000; “The Blair Witch Project,” $35,000. Each of those movies were wildly successful, grossing millions. The “Friday the 13th” series, inspired from the success of “Halloween,” has earned a worldwide total of $465 million. “There have been many failures, but the genre is one of the best bets in the film industry,” he says.

• **Great marketing:** Yablans’ legendary horror series appropriated a children’s holiday, Halloween, and made it exciting for adults. “Everyone wants to be young again – at least sometimes,” he says. Other successful horror franchises – “Nightmare on Elm Street,” “Friday the 13th” and “Scary Movie” copied Yablans’ *branded* approach: recognizable titles, costumes or makeup and theme music.

**About Irwin Yablans**

Irwin Yablans is the executive producer and creator of the “Halloween” film series, which forever changed the horror genre and the old studio system. His new autobiography, “The Man Who Created Halloween,” details a true rags-to-riches tale of a boy who grew up in a roach-invested tenement in Brooklyn to become the man who transformed society’s view of a children’s holiday. Yablans’ influence in Hollywood includes setting the standard for a new breed of independent producers and filmmakers, the discovery of famed director John Carpenter and advocating for studio support of one of the most acclaimed films in history, Francis Ford Coppola’s “Apocalypse Now.”