



How George Hernandez Went From Promo Pathway To 'Midnight, Texas'

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In his final month at NBC's Video Apprentice program, George Hernandez, a Promo Pathway 2015 graduate, is going out with a literal bang - or perhaps a scream. His sound design contribution to NBC's *Midnight, Texas* activation was on vivid display at San Diego Comic-Con.

NBC described the SDCC experience, located next to the Gaslamp's Tin Fish restaurant, as "a full-sensory experience in each part of town that will immerse fans deeper into the world of *Midnight*." The activation was truly a collaborative effort that included NBC Creative Marketing, NBC Promotions and Aaron Sims Creative. Hernandez was tapped by Steven Wagner, creative director at NBC Creative Marketing, to help craft the sound-effects bed.

Daily Brief's Kareem Taylor had a chance to talk with Hernandez just as the activation was going live in San Diego. An edited transcript follows:

DAILY BRIEF: Describe the experience to me. How are fans going to experience this activation and the work you did on it?

Hernandez: It's like going into a haunted house. The elements range from holograms to customized fabricated video walls. But it's the world of Midnight, Texas. When people go into these rooms, they get lost in the characters' world.

For example, Fiji, the witch on the show, has a room where you feel like you're in a witches house where all these sounds I produced try to bring you inside of her world. The idea of everything was that people who are interested in horror films or shows like True Blood would be interested in something like this and going into the world would maybe entice them to watch the show. It was all sound beds and images from the show being projected in the rooms.

There's also a cool last room that is Manfred's house. The walls are monitors, so when you hear the sounds, the images go with the sounds so everything is in sync. There's this section where the walls break apart and you go into 'hell.' On the show, Manfred (François Arnaud) tries to keep everything together. He tries to keep the people in the room to try to help him keep hell from coming up into our world. It's an interesting piece, and seeing Aaron Sims Creative create these amazing visual effects and graphics was really cool.

How did your contribution on this project come about?

A year ago, Steven Wagner saw some of the stuff I was producing, and he was interested in having me produce something for Timeless, which was similar to this. But it wasn't a room, it was more like a ride. I created a sound design experience just the way I did this year.

Steven really liked what I worked on with him last year, and this year at Promax, we were up for an award for that.

Were you just in a room by yourself looking at videos and images and deciding how you were going to put sounds together, or was it a really collaborative experience where everyone works in the same room?

It was great. I worked closely with Steve Wagner, he was the one that gave me direction. He gave me the basic idea of what I was going to be doing. He gave me a description of the piece, and I went into meetings with Aaron Sims' company where they would talk about the graphic elements they needed and how things were going to look. I just imagined in my head how things were going to sound. I went in a room by myself and I collected sounds that I thought would work well for the piece. I did a radio edit without any voiceover or dialogue to work with, and I just created a sound bed I felt would carry the story forward. Once I got the [voiceover] from the talent, I was able to place it under the sound effects and music.

At the end of it all, what's the length of the audio pieces?

The Manfred Room, which is the biggest one, was four minutes long. Before you go in, you hear sounds of how his house would sound if ghosts were in his

house and demons were trying to escape from 'hell.'

From there, once you go in the house, I had to build the narrative of how things were going to go down and come back together enough for the audience to enjoy and leave impressed with what the show is all about.

Now that it's done, how do you feel?

I feel like now I'm going to get a lot of sleep. But it was an honor to work with everyone on this project. It was extremely fun for me as well because I love the horror genre. People know I love horror movies because I have Evil Dead stuff in my office and other horror stuff. I really enjoyed building all the sound beds, and editing the visual elements to creating a believable experience. I wanted them to get lost in the world of Midnight, Texas. That was what was exciting for me. Doing something for a genre I really love and creating stuff I feel I'm good at.

How has your experience at NBC been so far?

It's great. I'm doing everything and I'm trying to make my time here count, so I'm trying to work with as many creative directors as I can, and I feel like I've accomplished that. I feel like I've grown so much creatively and professionally, and I think the results show in my work.

I've produced promos and digital spots for Facebook and Instagram and on-air spots and EPKs (electronic press kits). The Video Apprentice program at NBC has been really great for me in a lot of ways. I've made family and friends. I've been able to produce other things like pitch ideas for The Red Nose Day Special.

It's cool seeing the things I wrote for actors appear on air. I wrote a script, and I saw them on TV, and it was really cool to see all that come together. They nurture your creativity here. They fuel it. They make it happen.

A note from NBC on the SDCC Midnight, Texas Activation:

Under the direction of Marketing President Len Fogge, SVP Digital/Print Creative Gerry Logue and EVP On-Air Marketing/Video Creative Ron Hayes, Creative Director Steven Wagner and Writer Mike Loprete created the entire narrative for the Midnight Texas Comic-Con activation.

Steven brought George Hernandez onboard to produce, edit and sound design all of the assets for the experience. We worked closely with the NBC promotions team, which included Michael D'Angelo and outside event agencies, such as Aaron Sims Creative, to deliver great content for the various A/V capabilities.

For more information on Promo Pathway, go [here](#) or email Rachel Wyatt at rachel.wyatt@promaxbda.org.