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Randy Mack: Welcome to Essential NOLA Cinema, a conversation between cinephiles about the past and future of New Orleans movies. My name is Randy Mack. I'm pleased to tell to have John Beyer IV, JB IV in the house. Today, we're talking about Werner Herzog's (The) Bad Lieutenant. I was shocked to notice that in the title. There is a "the" in there. They didn't take Sean Parker's advice apparently and make it clean like Facebook. [Laughter] Yes, Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans, a real humdinger of a title, if there ever was one. [Laughter] When I have a New Orleans native on, I like to open with, where did you go to high school, brah?

John H. Beyer IV: I went to high school at Ben Franklin, McMMain right before then. I always shoehorn McMMain in there to give me a little bit more street cred because a lot of people are like, "Oh, you went to Franklin, the fancy public school." [Laughter] It didn't feel like it, but it definitely felt like a step above McMMain.

RM: All of that is total Chinese to me. [Laughter] So, I always follow up with: What neighborhood did you grow up in?

JB4: Lakeview.

RM: Okay.

JB4: Technically, I'm from Iowa, which is why I have no accent. My parents moved here when I was nine and we moved to New Orleans East, then participated in what is typically called white flight to Lakeview. We're pretty much the stereotypical honky New Orleans transplants in the early 80s. [Laughter] I consider myself a native. I mean, I've spent most of my life here. I was here for Katrina, all of it. I actually believe that if you were here through Katrina and stayed afterwards, that immediately qualifies you as a native. Some people disagree, but...

RM: I mean, it's a continuum to be sure. I think one of the things that makes the city unique and interesting is people have connected to the city on such a strong level, there's almost as a side effect, the feeling of a, "Oh, there's always someone more authentic than me." It's like an authenticity insecurity that comes with...

JB4: Oh, yes.

RM: ...having moved here, even if you're many generations in, you always know somebody who's even more generations older than you. My take on this is that the city has a palpable sense of history ongoing, that this is one of the last places in America that truly reveres its history and really prioritizes that as a culture and that awareness of history brings along with it a bit of insecurity, which is how you get the expression, "Nolier than thou" and so forth and so on.

JB4: [Laughter] That's the first time I've heard that, but it's totally accurate. It's funny. I politically lean liberal and I have a lot of talks with people about white privilege, which is a germane topic relative to this film. So, I don't feel like I'm going off road here. One of the things I've always said is that with white privilege comes a lot of baked in things that you don't see, a lot of what makes us privileged is invisible, and to a certain extent, if you get called racist or whatever, if you fuck up, you may get torched on social media or whatever and you may think it's unreasonable, but that's collateral damage for, ultimately, the benefits. The benefits of white privilege far outweigh any of the grief and shit that all these other minorities are, more often than not, entitled to, but even if they're totally off base, you have to go, "You know, this is just the reality of the situation. I have to take my lumps." I'm that way also with NOLA authenticity. If someone is four generations here and they're like, "Brah, you ain't know nothing." It's like, "You know what? I get it." I'm a Wonder Bread white boy from Iowa. I totally understand. [Laughter]

RM: Yes. It's like you got to take it as a learning opportunity.

JB4: Always. Always.

RM: So, you're a great editor. You helped me considerably on **Laundry Day** and other projects. You're a great visual effects guy, a filmmaker in your own right, and I was curious what your take on the whole Hollywood South thing is, since you were here before Hollywood South and got to watch it boom, and then bust, and then maybe boom again. Question mark. [Laughter] Where *Bad Lieutenant 2*... Actually, sidebar. I have been calling it "Bad Lieutenant 2" for a decade and didn't realize until the re-watch that there's actually no 2 anywhere in the title. I just assumed there was a 2 there, but it's actually just called *Bad Lieutenant*. What they have done to differentiate it is they put a "the" in front of it. There's no ["the"] in Abel Ferrara's version. Anyway, how did you come along? Were you aware of it while it was shooting and development in 2008 when it was...?

JB4: I'm trying to think. This was right around the time I got hired at Horizon, which was -they embody all the best and worst things about the tax incentives. I was inadvertently at the eye of the storm because there is a company called Horizon Entertainment that was running out of WDSU, Fox at the time. It was run by a guy whose name I won't mention here, but he produced a lot of football reality television and the Benson's wanted him involved in a reboot of the Saints and he just happened to get engaged and hired right when the Saints made their Super Bowl run post-Katrina. This was all based on capitalizing on the tax incentives. They brought him in as what they thought was an authority and he turned out to be, like so many producers really, full of shit, [Laughter] and he ended up using it as a boondoggle and cooked the books

and ultimately made off with millions of dollars. He would claim a \$2 million budget on something that he may have spent maybe \$100,000.00 on, but we ended up giving him something that looked more like \$400,000.00. We killed ourselves to make it awesome, but he blew it and the jig was up at a certain point, and he packed up and left, got handed his hat by the Benson's and...

RM: Wow. You're working for Voldemort. [Laughter]

JB4: More or less. I mean, if there's one outfit that could afford to be magnanimous and throw someone a little bit of cheddar, it was the Benson organization, yet we were doing the exact opposite, and people were totally down for it. They were so thrilled with that Super Bowl victory, and at the end of the day, you still only used it for a money grab, which is really depressing because if someone more passionate had been at the helm, like you or me or any number of people that you and I know, it would've been a totally different story. After Horizon Entertainment imploded, another guy, who is at least a New Orleans native, tried to do a reality-based show here out in New Orleans. It was called Piece of Cake with the Haydel's who are a great bunch of guys. I ended up shooting, editing, directing. I mean, I did eight episodes that Fox aired locally and it stomped everybody in the Nielsen's. I mean, that was essentially one dude editing. Unfortunately, the guy who is in charge of it tried to sell it to Hollywood and Hollywood basically - the new normal is you come up with a good idea. You show it to them, they say, "Great. We'll take it. We'll put our producers on it and come up with four more ideas that we can turn into a television show, so then maybe then you'll get an opportunity to make your own." He wasn't having it. So, they reached that stalemate that ultimately resulted in Piece of Cake being in development hell to this very day.

RM: It was a creative control struggle ultimately?

JB4: Yes, it was a thing. He shot it on standard def. This is in 2009, and I told him, I was like, "You got to do it HD, man." He wouldn't listen to me.

RM: Yes, that's bad. I mean, web series maybe.

JB4: Maybe.

RM: I don't know. The ship has sailed.

JB4: I mean, we beat Cake Boss and the Tonight Show, and locally, we stomped everybody. The Haydel's are a draw.

RM: Holy cow. That's amazing.

JB4: To answer your question - we went way off course here. The short version is, I want to say that during filming, they may have used Horizon's space. They would rent out some space in 32 for wardrobe and table reads and shit. We may have crossed paths with Bad Lieutenant 2, The Bad Lieutenant, [Laughter] but I had no knowledge of it really until I

saw it. Pretty much anything Nic Cage is in, I'm down to watch. Ever since Vampire's Kiss, I'm like, "Good or bad, that guy is going to give you something to remember." [Laughter] Of course, he has a very well-publicized love affair with New Orleans. So, I knew it was going to be something pretty special, and the first time I saw it, much like when I saw *The Big Lebowski*, I didn't get it all. I was so overwhelmed with certain parts of it that I missed out on 50% of the subtext and everything else. I walked out going, "I think that was good." It's hard to tell. Because there are some moments in it from a filmmaking perspective that just reeked of student film sometimes, and I'm not talking about the iguana scene. [Laughter] We can talk about that too, but...

RM: Yes, my first watching of *Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call*, I was so disappointed because I was such a fan of this guy's documentaries. I'd actually never seen a feature film of his, only feature documentaries. So, I thought, well, this guy, his legend precedes him in this way. I thought it was going to be either more crazy, more unhinged, more like European Arthouse, like anything goes, and I thought he'd bring a documentary feel to it like a *vérité* style kind of thing, and then when I saw how glossy it was and how many celebrities were in it, it was... But it was also, as you were saying, to your point, it was disjointed in this really weird way that felt so amateurish and not in a *vérité*-like... Harmony Korine's last couple of movies have felt amateurish in a super intentional way. They felt almost like YouTube videos or something that made you feel like it was really happening. [00:10:00]

JB4: Right, right.

RM: Korine found a way of shooting an amateur style that made you truly believe what was happening in the frame, like iPhone shooting. Herzog's approach is like... I re-watched the opening 10 minutes right before we recorded, and I kept realizing that part of what makes this so disjointed is that every scene is shot with almost a different *mise-en-scène*. There'll be one scene that's all-wide angles, glossy lighting, and hot key lights from the side, and then the next scene will be a fisheye lens rotating 360 degrees through like a tiny shotgun apartment, and then what he does with the audio is so trippy and it's like loosely connected but not totally. The effect of jumping from these aesthetics, scene to scene to scene just makes you... It doesn't feel good. It doesn't digest well as an experience in an interesting way. [Laughter] On the second rewatch, I came to decide that that was probably intentional.

I don't know if it was a successful experiment, but I felt like he was really going for something. I grokked at intentionality behind the decisions that might be— and this is total Monday morning quarterbacking— that Werner Herzog was taking a tongue-in-cheek approach to the genre elements. Like he's interested in a lot of aspects of the story but not all of them, and the stuff that he was not interested in, he spun as a

tongue-in-cheek sort of approach too, and that's why the tone is all over the place.

[Laughter]

JB4: Totally, yes.

RM: I've read a bunch of interviews, preparing for this conversation, with him at the time and he almost exclusively across the, I don't know, all six interviews I could find, he only spoke of post-Katrina New Orleans and the stories he heard, and he would hear stories, and then worked them into the screenplay that weren't really there in the original script and so on. But he never actually talks about the story, the plot, the characters. All of that seemed almost like pro forma. He's like, "Yes, I'm working for Hollywood. I got to do this, but I'm really interested in is..." He talked a lot about how he directed Nicholas Cage, he said this in almost every interview, to find "the joy of evil" in his performance. Of course, that's classic Herzog. That's like every Herzog movie is about that somehow. [Laughter]

JB4: [German accent] "The bliss of evil."

RM: It's funny because I can't impersonate him, but I can hear his voice in my head, when I'm reading these interviews, that distinctive German thing he has comes through, but then I try to imitate him. I was like, "Oh, this would be really funny on the pod," and no, I can't do it. So, I'm not even going to try. [Laughter]

JB4: [Laughter] I can't really either.

RM: How come nobody's made an app that you can just speak in to, and then it will play what you said back as Werner Herzog? Because I could do all these quotes from the interviews and I could play them into the mic as Werner. We need that app, people. Somebody get on that.

JB4: Even navigation would be awesome. [Laughter] "Your fruitless quest ends in 2.4 miles" or whatever. [Laughter] You have to take a sort of overall global view at it, and then you get granular, which is what we do as filmmakers. There's that one scene where Nic Cage corners the couple coming out of the bar when he's jonesing for drugs and shakes him down. It's just the setup of the scene. He pulls up and the camera follows him and they're making out against the wall like they don't notice him coming. That's such an 80s set up, and a lot of it is set - he does a lot of exteriors. It's just like establishing shots and that's like a relic from the 80s. For me, when I see that, I'm just like, "This is unnecessary." In this day and age, when there's so many distractions, cellphones and whatnot, it's hard to fight that urge to look away and go like, "All right. Establishing shot. How long is he going to need this?" Of course, because it's New Orleans, I'm a little bit more invested, so I pay a little more intention, but you know what I'm talking about, right?

RM: Absolutely. New Orleans' geography is like a game you play when you watch movies shot here.

JB4: Exactly. [Laughter]

RM: The fidelity of the geography was quite sound in the movie.

JB4: Mostly.

RM: I mean, there's actual dialogue, "Oh, yes, they're at the corner of Annunciation and General Taylor," and they cut there and that's actually where they are. It's like, "Oh, look at that." At one point, there's Burgundy and Mazant, and I ride my bike by that place almost like every week at least, and I look up and I think about the iguanas.

JB4: So, what were the geographical fails? There were a couple that I caught.

RM: The trip outside of town, when they go to Biloxi is totally ridiculous. [Laughter]

JB4: Yes. [Laughter] Yes, either that or he took a wrong turn onto the GNO Bridge.

RM: Well, a lot of the driving stuff wasn't right, which is totally forgivable, I think.

JB4: Sure.

RM: So, when they're in the police station and they're looking out on to the highway, I'm thinking that's got to be Tulane and Broad, right? That's the courthouse and OPP, right?

JB4: No. I want to say it looks like it's around WDSU, right off I-10. That's what it looks, that angle to me.

RM: Are you talking about Howard Ave?

JB4: I think so, yes.

RM: Is there a police station down there? That's the question, because I was looking out those windows. It's the early scenes where he comes in and Val Kilmer is interrogating this guy and he's had him in there for hours, and then he interrupts the interrogation, chases him out, says you've got to be nice to him when he comes back in. It's clearly lit in order to expose what's going on out the window. I actually found a recurring motif during the film is Herzog was really interested in what's going on outside windows and he lit everything to amplify that in the frame so that there's this borderline distracting background stuff. In the case of the scene I'm talking about, it's probably 15 minutes in. It's a really weird looking interchange where there's two levels of highway crisscrossing and they're not crisscrossing at a perfect angle and my thought was like maybe that's the Broad Street bridge going over the interstate where the Crescent City Connection merges.

JB4: It could be.

RM: I don't think that's a police station. I think that's the courthouse.

JB4: There is a police station there, there is.

RM: Oh, yes?

JB4: Yes. My girlfriend works at OPP, so I drop her off there every day, or I used to. Now, she has her own car.

RM: [Laughter] Friends in high places.

JB4: The one other geographical distortion was, and this is basic, but Eva Mendes, the exterior of her apartment is in Lee Circle, but she's right across from the World Trade Center, or the building formally known as. I was like...

RM: Yes, that's totally true. I was using the views out of her windows to figure out which building they're in. I decided they were in a hotel and they were probably in either the Loews or the Harrah's Hotels.

JB4: Probably. Yes, exactly.

RM: Because you can see the World Trade Center from one side, and then out the other, you could see the top of Harrah's Casino looking the other way. You're right, every time he goes to the lobby and out to the street, he's in Lee Circle. It was probably a thing of Lee Circle is much more photographic, just more visually distinct. They were probably just like, "Let's forget this ugly Poydras Street." It's probably the most important street in the city that almost never shows up in movies.

JB4: It's a good point.

RM: Because it's so bland.

JB4: Yes. This is sort of the fun shit that we get to do, we get to get that granular about - I think overall, I think that movie does a really good job of capturing certainly the spirit of the city at that time, better than a lot of other films I've watched. I mean, there forgivable infractions. It's not distracting, certainly not to anybody who's never been to the city.

RM: The whole role of Katrina in the film is a head scratcher in a couple of ways. [Laughter]

JB4: Yes.

RM: I assume Herzog was trying to talk about some of the injustices and things. In the interviews, he talks about how he was - the screenplay came to him through Edward R. Pressman who is a film producer. He's now almost 80. He's an OG like 70s and 80s guy. He produced Abel Ferrara's Bad Lieutenant originally.

JB4: Okay.

RM: How Pressman got the screenplay is a totally mystery to me, but you were talking about how a lot of the film feels like a bad 80s cop TV or whatever. The screenwriter is a Steve Bochco guy who only has one feature film credit, this movie we're talking about, and all his other credits are Steve Bochco TV shows, including L.A. Law and Cop Rock.

JB4: [Laughter] You know you answered a lot of questions because I didn't get a chance to research that, but I was wondering. I was like, "What else has this guy written?" Because it's a very bizarre film, and ultimately, I liked it. I really liked Cage's performance. I felt like there were some things that were a little too on the nose, but it certainly was taking risks. I mean, the imaginary iguanas seemed completely out of left field, even though there's a prevalent motif of animals and wildlife, especially reptilian. I mean, it opens with a shot of a snake.

RM: Yes, there's like four reptiles that I can think of off the top of my head. The opening shot is a snake in the water. You go to the dead alligator on the side of the road and the car accident scene, you have the iguanas thing and you have the goldfish in the bowl at the site of the massacre. Herzog isn't just throwing these things in there on the side. He puts them in the foreground and he stops the movie cold for you to appreciate these animal forms. [00:20:00]

JB4: [Laughter] Yes, exactly. Yes. The most egregious example being, of course, and apparently, he was insistent enough on this that he was comfortable being included as the person who is the cinematographer specifically for that GoPro iguana footage during, which apparently, he got bit. [Laughter] You can see that footage. At the same time, it's like, "What happens in that scene otherwise?" I don't know what was supposed to happen prior to those iguanas being there, but that definitely added an element in which if you're going to like it, you're really going to like it. Do you know what I'm saying? That's the point at which that movie dares you to walk away.

RM: Absolutely. The thing about the iguana scene that really put it over the top - because I remember my first viewing, like I said, I was quite disappointed and I thought Herzog had just fucked off. Now, I have a different opinion. I remember as I was watching the film, thinking like, "This needs to be either less crazy or more crazy, because right now, it's in this middle ground that doesn't quite work for me."

JB4: That's legit. Actually, that is legit. Because it is pretty conventional for something that a guy that did Grizzly Man did.

RM: Yes, or Fitzcarraldo or whatever.

JB4: Right.

RM: So, basically, when we got to the iguana scene, I was like, "All right. More wackiness." Then, that R&B track comes in, when the music comes in, and suddenly Cage's mood goes from like super dour to super happy and this beautiful R&B ballad's playing, and they're just showing the iguanas just like looking around and stuff, I just thought, "Okay. Now, this is where I wish the movie would stay in." Do you know what I mean? That kind of... To really make a meal out of this moment, but again, the way he uses audio throughout the film is mostly disjointed and jarring. I mean, maybe it's supposed

to reproduce the mindset of a drug addict or whatever. That character is taking a lot of uppers and downers, sometimes at the same time.

So, I guess it would be disjointed, but Wernog... ugh, "Wernog" [laughter] - Herzog said in his interviews that he really doesn't like drug culture and he took a lot of the drugs out of the screenplay. He didn't want to glamorize drugs. He just wanted to use them where it was necessary to establish a mood or a story point. The script was originally set in New York City, which makes sense. Nic Cage and him had been talking about working together. So, when he was contemplating the script and he was contemplating Cage, he called him up and he said, "I've got this Bad Lieutenant thing, but I think it's not really a Bad Lieutenant movie. We'll get that name off there. Don't worry about it," which, of course, he failed to do. He and Cage were so into each other...

JB4: I wonder if that helped the marketing of it. I would say it probably did.

RM: It did. You're dead on. The idea of moving it to New Orleans was an idea that both Nic Cage and Werner Herzog had at the same time basically, and then the producers were super into it because of the tax credits. So, they were like, "Oh, this is fantastic. Plus, it's a new wrinkle. It spins. It'll differentiate it from the Abel Ferrara film." "Port of Call New Orleans" was Werner's idea for a title. So, what the producers did, because they had the sequel rights, remake rights or whatever it was, they just combined the two. That's why there's three titles' worth of title on this film.

JB4: Yes, it's really bizarre.

RM: It makes sense, because like you said, Nicholas Cage has a long history with the city. Have you seen his first directorial effort, Sonny?

JB4: I have not.

RM: With James Franco?

JB4: No.

RM: S-O-N-N-Y. Like Sonny Corleone. James Franco plays a male prostitute who grows up. His mom is a prostitute. He grows up as a gigolo basically.

JB4: Okay.

RM: It's all set in New Orleans. It doesn't have much to do with New Orleans. It was just set here. It's a very weird movie. It's very artsy and experimental. It's a little like Bad Lieutenant 2 in that it's neither fish nor fowl, but it's an interesting movie and it uses a lot of Rush in the soundtrack, which is...

JB4: What? Okay.

RM: ...again, not very New Orleans, but... [Laughter]

JB4: Yes, that sounds really weird.

RM: He hasn't directed much since. I think he made one other feature. So, when Herzog came down here, he tried to get permission from the NOPD to approve the screenplay. He says he got permission on the first try. He said the NOPD loved the script. [Laughter]

JB4: Which is insane. [Laughter]

RM: He had nothing but nice things to say about the NOPD in his interviews. He goes out of his way to say the rest of the NOPD are exemplary members of their communities. This is not supposed to stand for the entire police department, which I thought was very interestingly, what's the word, diplomatic of Werner "I have no fucks to give" Herzog.

JB4: I know. I mean, to a certain extent, he was informed by empathy of what we just went through and they - I'm one degree of separation away from Paul Accardo, the guy who ended up killing himself on duty. So, there was a lot of PTSD that they're struggling with. So, I'm sure he didn't want to contribute to that. What I found interesting structurally about the story was that Cage - I read a number of articles that had interesting takes on it as a referendum on New Orleans and Katrina, which I see, but for me, it was more that every time he tried to do something good or outside of himself, he - it's a no-good deed goes unpunished thing. I mean, it opens with him essentially doing something quasi heroic and messing himself up permanently for it, which I thought was an interesting starting point, and it wasn't anything that was fetishized. Like you didn't see flashes of red and close up of his gritted teeth, and him screaming, yelling, howling, and anything that somebody a little bit more over the top like even David Fincher may have done. It was just jump, cut, a couple of audio clips, and then he's essentially stuck with a prescription that he didn't want. That was the other thing I thought was interesting and very of its time. Like this is going to date it in a good and bad way but the whole opioid crisis.

RM: Oh, yes.

JB4: Do you know what I mean? It was right there starting when it came out. In some ways, it was [supprecient] that way. Knowing what we know now, it was interesting to look at it through that lens, there's a guy who was essentially getting bottlenecked into a modality he didn't want and it was all based on a mistake he made, trying to help someone out. I thought that was interesting.

RM: No, you're right. I'm thinking about that because there's a lot to unpack there. You have August 2005 is Hurricane Katrina, the flooding, immediately, the evacuation of the city. 2006, 2007, 2008, the screenplay gets to Herzog and they announced it in Variety with Nicholas Cage attached. They put it together. They start to shoot in New Orleans. They shoot in New Orleans in late 2008, it comes out in 2009, it plays Venice and so

forth. So, you're looking at a period piece, the title card says, "Six months after Katrina," which puts it in February of '07?

JB4: Right around there, yes.

RM: It's like recent history period film. The thing about Katrina films I've noticed, obviously, this is just my take on it, but the ones that do the worst are the ones that try to capture the most of it, do you know what I mean? The ones that really try to get every detail end up just covering everything very superficially whereas the most effective ones tend to really focus on something small like a neighborhood or a family or whatever. For some reason, it's more palpable, the extent of devastation when you go in narrowly. Katrina informs so much of the story, but it's not a part of the plot or anything.

JB4: Not really.

RM: I think if a New Orleans' native had done a pass on the screenplay, there would've been a lot more... The plot involves them trying to find Big Fate, a drug dealer who they think was responsible for these murders. What they're doing is, they're rounding up people off the street from the neighborhood, and then leaning on them until they spill some information that can get them to the next guy, who can get them to the next guy, who can get them to Big Fate. It's an incredibly episodic plot in that sense, where you're just going through side characters as you get closer and closer to the kingpin, but they talk a lot about who's out on parole, who's just been released from jail and stuff. In February of 2007, I don't think those would've been the real conversation. I think it would've been who's in town, whose family is still here, who's come back, who hasn't come back.

JB4: That's what they attempted with Treme and with mixed results, to be diplomatic on my end. [Laughter] Not my favorite thing. Honestly, I was expecting "The Wire post-Katrina New Orleans." So, I was expecting all that to be a little bit more peripheral in the backdrop, but I just thought it would add such a unique element to it. I mean, shit, you could've called it "The Wire New Orleans." That would've been fucking great, but that's not what it was and that's not what he wanted to do. I, as a New Orleanian, appreciate and admire the love letter to the city, but it's all over the fucking place and not terribly riveting viewing. Not for me anyway.

RM: Yes. Treme is a love it or hate it show in the city. Most filmmakers I know have a nuanced checklist of like, "It did these things well, it did these things not so well. It totally beefed on this issue, but it kicked it out of the park with that issue." Whereas I've run into people in the city who, I guess they've either bonded over it or they were involved, especially there are a couple of musicians I know who got paid really, really well. Basically, they love the economic impact the show had and they don't really talk

much about the substance of what was on the screen or the storylines or the characters or anything. I have a nuanced view too. I just think that what killed the show fundamentally was its timeline. Its narrative timeline was that every year was going to follow the calendar year and that is such a literal approach to New Orleans' time that doesn't really capture the experience of New Orleans' time, which is extremely slow, and then fast, and then slow, and then time is its own unique energy here that does not follow the calendar whatsoever. A year can feel like a month and an hour can feel like a day and vice versa. [00:30:00]

JB4: That's what **Laundry Day** is about, is what you're talking about. [Laughter]

RM: Yes. [Laughter] Laundry Day was partly inspired as a reaction to the use of time in Treme.

JB4: Oh, wow. Okay.

RM: Yes, the poly-subjectivity thing comes from a number of movies including Election and so forth, where you're spending time in people's heads and seeing that one person's king is another person's court jester and vice versa. The sense that an average day can be like a week's worth of events is something that I noticed probably from my first week in New Orleans. Probably the day I went to do the laundry and saw that bar fight break out in Checkpoint Charlie's was around the time I started to realize like there's epics to be written about simply trying to get an errand done in the city.

JB4: Right. Right. [Laughter] So, in that sense, I guess Treme was doomed to fail, certainly from our perspectives anyway. Maybe Bad Lieutenant: New Orleans came closer to what I was expecting from David Simon than what he gave us.

RM: That's really interesting. Yes, it's definitely got a post-traumatic flavor, but it's only in... It's like Nicholas Cage is carrying that post-traumatic quality single-handedly because you don't really see it in any of the other characters. The other cops are just going about their business. Everyone seems fine, for the most part. You don't see anyone else popping pills or working triple shifts and stuff.

JB4: True.

RM: Herzog in interviews talks about how police were telling him stories. They would just disappear.... Like, half the force disappeared, or a non-zero number of police officers just simply vanished, because they just didn't want to be here and deal with it, and so that required the rest of the police to do triple duty and so on and in horrible conditions, and Herzog talks about how police officers would evacuate by simply stealing cars from dealerships.

JB4: Yes.

RM: They would just go to the lot and grab a car and leave town. He worked that into the opening scene when Val Kilmer and Nicholas Cage walked into the locker room and

they're looking for Duffy. It's a bad bit of dialogue because I didn't understand it until I read the interview with Herzog after the fact, but he says, "Yes, Duffy grabbed the car from the lot and left town." I was like, "Oh, he grabbed the squad car from the police lot" is what I interpreted that but Herzog's referring to actually stealing a privately owned vehicle from a car dealership and bailing on the duties. It's said so fast and so quickly and in such a bizarre context where you don't even have time to absorb it. It's interesting that he worked a lot of stuff like that in, including the whole gator-flipping-a-car car accident, he says he got out of the newspaper.

JB4: Oh, wow. Okay.

RM: So, he was doing his best in a way, but I think he wasn't interested in Katrina per se as a specific tragedy. He was more interested in the general sense of what does tragedy do to a person, because Werner's got that galaxy brain, like "what is human nature," "what is the essence of to be a man" or whatever. You can understand it because he's such an abstract thinker that he wouldn't be necessarily going into shit like FEMA and stuff like that per se. It's also, I don't know, I just think he could've done better with it too, especially in the writing of it.

JB4: Yes. There were some things that were too on the nose for me. For one thing, the fact that he had his gun always hanging out from his cock is a little too on the nose for me like, all right, I get it. Then, he goes like, "What's a man without his gun?" I was like, "If you hadn't had figured that out, that that was important to him..."

RM: Oh, that's a great example of what I would call the tongue-in-cheek cop parody component to the film where he seemed to be making fun of these things.

JB4: Yes, totally.

RM: Did you see that gun? At one point, he actually calls it like, "They took my .44 magnum." I was like, "First of all, cops don't carry .44 magnums. Second of all, the barrel of that gun is right out of the TV show Sledge Hammer! from the 80s." Do you remember that?

JB4: Yes. [Laughter] Totally. Yes.

RM: It's a parody prop. It's Dirty Harry.

JB4: It is. It is. Which is fine. I mean, it was neither here nor there for me. I was just like, "Wow, that's on the nose." [Laughter]

RM: The thing I liked least about the film the first time and I still don't like is the... Werner was trying to show a man in pain who's struggling with X, Y, and Z. He glamorized the shit out of it. Because he's got every woman throwing themselves at him. The guy is doing drugs with immunity, er impunity rather. He's basically getting away with murder and you barely see the suffering. You just see this guy with like he's got money and girls, and okay, he's got money problems. He's got like big wallet problems, first world

problems. He's got the lamest problems. Then, when shit really starts to, like, the sharks really are circling, he loses his badge and he's super in debt, and he's now trying to work with all these gangsters, and there's an actual sense of like menace and something bad is going to happen. The movie yanks the rug out, and tacks on this really strange coda where everything is suddenly right. There's like the one scene in the police department where all his problems were solved in a single scene.

JB4: Yes. [Laughter]

RM: Then, the next thing you know, they fast-forward a few months and his girlfriend is clean, his parents are clean, she's pregnant, and they're buying a home in the suburbs together and like, "Okay. What the hell is this?" [Laughter] Then, he then pulls the rug out from under that by then immediately going to the redux of the scene outside the chophouse where he riffles to two club kids, which I had to do a compare and contrast. I held the frames of those two scenes next to each other to make sure it wasn't the same people and it's not.

JB4: It's not.

RM: But it's so fucking close. They're like in the same wardrobe, it's lit in the exact same way. They must've shot it at the same time. So, the question then it leaves you, it's almost like the end of *The Florida Project*, you're left with, "Was that a real thing or was that a wishful hallucination kind of thing?"

JB4: It's legit. I feel like it was legit and I'll tell you why. Because it reminds me of the second thing that I thought was too on the nose, was this whole monologue about burying the spoon in the backyard. It's the silver spoon metaphor and...

RM: Literally.

JB4: It's a referendum on white privilege because he gets away with all the shit. Do you know what I mean? What he decides are virtuous versus side quests worth going on, for example, going all the way to Biloxi.

RM: Right, with a dog.

JB4: And a witness.

RM: Yes, with the witness and the dog. The whole point is that he's trying to get rid of the dog and no one will look after the dog, and he's so mean and he's so...

JB4: Narcissistic.

RM: ...unfeeling toward these human beings, torturing that old lady and everything, yet there's this stray dog that he can't bear to just tie to a pole and put a sign on saying, "Someone please adopt me" or whatever. It's a weird thing, and so when I re-watched it, I was trying to figure out like is this a fundamentally good character who has just been distorted by his circumstances?

JB4: Right.

RM: There's no point in the beginning of the movie where you show him - you see him being good at police work and you do see him save the guy in the flooded jail. Which comes as a surprise because he's mocking the guy and torturing him, but then eventually, he's like, "All right. Fuck it. I'll save him." Basically, you can see that his attitude is already terrible. About 30 seconds before, he saves that guy in the flooded jail, they're in the locker room, looking for Duffy. They open his thing. They find the photographs of Duffy's wife and he decides to keep the things. Kilmer says, "Hey, wait a minute. I'm going to have to answer to him for this." He goes, "Fuck, Duffy. No, fuck him." He starts screaming in Kilmer's face. You feel like he's already traumatized or already like a loose cannon, hot head, selfish guy who's just going to take advantage of his position for whatever he wants. You're like, "Well, if that's where the guy's baseline was, then obviously, this drug addiction is going to make it worse." They never talk about how long he's been on the force.

They do show him achieve several ranks of advancement. He goes from sergeant to lieutenant very early in the film, and then at the end of the film, he goes lieutenant to captain. Was this guy always unhinged, did Katrina make him unhinged? Was it being in the force so long, or is this guy just a bad egg in that sense? There's no clear examination of where this guy came from. You only see him in this window of time. Maybe it's supposed to be the guy's... when you hit your nadir, your bottom... I should know this from listening to all those Marc Maron podcasts. The bottom is when you have the moment of clarity...

JB4: He's doing more drugs and - yes.

RM: ...that you realize you need to get help. I feel like maybe this is the story of a person hitting their bottom and coming out, but then you see him scoring drugs off those kids at the end, and then what is he doing in that hotel room in the penultimate scene where Nick Gomez comes in and...

JB4: Well, I mean, he's doing more drugs and...

RM: He's like just staring in his face. He's just zoned out. Are we supposed to understand he's achieved everything he's wanted, and yet, it's not fulfilling?

JB4: He's still in a prison, and therefore, he's rescuing him from his prison by bringing him to the aquarium after hours, which is the other example of animals, and it's... [Laughter] That almost feels like an epilogue. That scene seems like a deliberate almost farcical parody of Bad Lieutenant. You think this is going to be that Bad Lieutenant, it's going to be the exact opposite of it. It's a weird swerve, right? Then, this whole other part, which is philosophically dense enough, you could probably make a whole movie about that, and in fact, entire movies have been made about the prison

of a day-to-day life and feeling trapped and doing something to sabotage it, just to mix it up. That's just like the epilogue of the movie. It's like three minutes. [00:40:00]

RM: It's like a second epilogue too though. It's such a weird bit of... I guess it's editing.

JB4: It is. It is.

RM: I mean, I guess that's been underlying so much of our conversation about why the film feels so tonally disjointed and camera work disjointed and scene to scene to scene. There's something about the editing clearly been designed in post - I mean, there are ways to smooth out. You would know as a filmmaker and an editor that your director may walk off in the middle and you have to shoot footage to match other footage. There are ways to smooth out the wrinkles in scene-to-scene flow. Music is one great tool. Insert shorts, there's all kinds of filmmaking tricks to make flow from scene-to-scene natural and Werner Herzog was clearly not interested in that, in the editing of this film. He...

JB4: Exactly.

RM: It's clearly there to make you whiplash. [Laughter]

JB4: Yes, I mean, I would dare say...

RM: This is a fascinating choice.

JB4: Yes, I would dare say that the jagged topography is part of what he likes about it. He certainly had the means by which to smooth some of those edges, but I feel like that was a choice, evidenced no more prominently than, again, the iguana scene. I mean, that's a fucking GoPro shot. I was like, "That is the most jarring aesthetic gear shift, probably, cinematically, ever". Certainly, for a cop noir film that I've ever fucking seen.

RM: I mean, do you feel like it puts you in Cage's head in that moment? Because that was my interpretation.

JB4: Of course. That's the idea. I mean, that's the only time he uses the same thing for the alligator that's watching his animatronic buddy's guts all over the place. That just seems like an aesthetic choice. So, it could be seen as a bit of a confusing thing. I was with it the whole time. It's the only side note here. Fairuza Balk looked great and I don't know why she's not a lot busier. Independent of the fact that she looked fantastic, she was great in the part. What the hell happened to her, man? She needs to be busier.

RM: No, that's true. I recently watched her first movie. She was a child actor. The Miloš Forman film, Valmont.

JB4: Oh Valmont, yes.

RM: A loose adaptation according to the opening credits of Dangerous Liaisons.

JB4: Sure. Yes.

RM: It came out about a year after the 80s Dangerous Liaisons with John Malkovich and Michelle Pfeiffer. Fairuza plays the Uma Thurman role. The difference is in the 80s adaptation, Uma Thurman's probably 20 something and Fairuza was probably 14.

JB4: Wow.

RM: Which is exactly what wouldn't've been appropriate for the era because that's when people got married back then. It's one of those movies where you keep thinking like, "Oh, this is a genuine star." She's in Almost Famous, which is in 2000. She should've had, if there was any justice, a Parker Posey type career.

I think there was a couple other really good performances in the film [LB: POCNO]. I really liked Vondie Curtis-Hall. He's always like one of my favorites, and then Lance Nichols, New Orleans' own Lance Nichols showed up to throw them out of the office, which is great.

JB4: He sure did. Also, Jeremy Johnson who sadly died from a freak undertow accident in Florida, but he is the brother of Sean Johnson who's like a yoga master in New Orleans, Wild Lotus Yoga. He played one of the internal affairs cops that started busting Nicholas Cage's chops when he tried to choke out the old lady.

RM: Yes, the guys who take his badge.

JB4: Yes, exactly. The guys who take his badge and gun. He is the younger dude. He was great. I was like, "Shit, I would've used him more if I'd known he was that good an actor."

RM: Laundry Day's Kerry Cahill was in there for a couple of scenes.

JB4: Yes, I saw her. Yes, she was - the heroin. She dropped the heroin off in the...

RM: At the evidence locker room or whatever, and then later, they were like, "Wait, there was only how much in that bag?" [Laughter]

JB4: Exactly. [Laughter] A lot of local faces in there. It was nice.

RM: Yes, it's very cool. Trey Burvant. So, to step back, I created this show to try to give people inspiration for creating new work, to look at films from the past with an eye toward how they could learn from it, take lessons from it, or apply it to material moving forward. I think what this film does really well is, if you look at the components of Nicholas Cage's character's world, he's got bookies, they're sort of ambiguously mafia, but they're clearly like guys who will break your knee caps with impunity, and you've got cops both corrupt and not corrupt. Basically, you have a theme of corruption going through all of the people he's working with. Even the African-American people he encounters have various degrees of purity or impurity along the way.

JB4: For sure.

RM: That seems like a really interesting theme you could explore a lot in a different context. You take it out of the police force. You could talk about a small business, like a grocer or a corner shop owner who's trying to keep his business going in a rough community, he's got alcohol distributors who need to supply the bar and you've got the video poker people, you have bartenders who have various degrees of trustworthiness, you have the local patrons and tourists. I look at Bad Lieutenant abstractly as "a man in a maelstrom" kind of story. So, you can apply the man in a maelstrom - or it could be a woman, obviously. It could be a teacher. It could be a bus driver. It could be any number of things. Even a bartender. If you shift the perspective of a bar from the owner to the bartender, you could have a really interesting story where there's a person caught in the middle. You could have any number of those street performers hustling. Traveling kids. This whole "person in a maelstrom" paradigm can apply to people from all walks of life and in all kinds of context. I thought that was an interesting thing that a filmmaker could consider when [Crosstalk] the right during the pandemic when we can't actually shoot anything.

JB4: What I found particularly interesting and singular about the film is the anti-hero is sort of in vogue now. I mean, Breaking Bad is like the gold standard. What I thought was interesting is, as you had mentioned earlier starting off, the guy was a broken guy from the drop. Do you know what I mean? He's definitely, if not corrupt, certainly demonstrating a certain degree of devi-may-care attitude from the outset. Getting back to what I said earlier, I do think that it really does explore the highs and lows of the tunnel vision that comes with white privilege. Because there's a virtuous - he's ultimately inspired to do good things by people of color in the film, but at the end of the day, he's a hostage to his own wants, desires, and frustrations. The closest film I can come, now that I'm saying it out loud, is Clockwork Orange. A weird anti-hero who essentially gets away with a lot of fucked up shit, and at the end, you are still rooting for him. I don't hate him.

RM: That film walks a razor's edge in terms of character relatability.

JB4: Yes.

RM: I think you're right. I think there's something really interesting and it almost becomes a hall of mirrors the more I think about it in a way. There is a fundamental flaw to the Bad Lieutenant 2, which is the privileged male, white male perspective. It's easy to picture Herzog and Cage on set saying, like, "This is an African-American majority city. We're shooting here in Central City on real locations that have been destroyed by the storm in the middle of this rebuilding effort. This is about the poison of white privilege." But at the same time, they're still making a movie that ultimately is a white privilege, white perspective movie.

I would love someday to see a movie where you have an African-American main character who's a drug dealer who's not treated as a tragedy. Where he's a pragmatist working the white privilege of the drug culture here, the tourists who come to party and the locals in the service industry who like to unwind with a bag of coke after work or whatever, and he sees it as simply economic transference. Like just moving the money from where there's a lot of it to where there's a little of it. Xzibit's character, Big Fate, he's fascinatingly clear headed and straightforward about everything. He's not portrayed as a psychopath. He's not unbalanced. He's very clear eyed. He calls bullshit when he sees it, but he's articulate and he seems very straightforward. He's not a bullshiter and so on.

JB4: What happens to him? Like, he gets arrested, but you think he has a drop on Cage with all the collaborations they'd done and yet... I mean, I don't think he got murdered.

RM: No, remember he puts his DNA at the crime scene. The lucky crack pipe thing, he takes the lucky crack pipe and he puts it back at the crime scene, and now, his DNA's at the...
[00:50:00]

JB4: Right. He can't say, "But they were there to kill him." Like there was a weird little loophole there that actually probably makes it more arguably a dream sequence... [Laughter] but at the same time, it also works nicely with the whole notion of, "He got away with it because they're not going to believe a black drug dealer." Just like that other guy he interrogates where he's like, "You smoked a joint right in front of me." He's like, "Oh, but they're not going to believe me. It's your word over mine and they're going to take your word every time."

RM: Right.

JB4: So, I just answered my own question. [Laughter]

RM: I liked that scene a lot because it's not only that it's his word against his, but that the cops know he's not lying about that. The cops know how bad Cage's character is.

JB4: Yes, exactly.

RM: But they're still just going to go along with it because it's code blue and all that.

JB4: They don't care.

RM: It's depressing, but I would...

JB4: Totally.

RM: I don't know. My experience with the police in the city is that they'll often, when busting up a scene... They're coming into an aftermath where you have a lot of drunk people, a lot of stoned people, a lot of people who have been pushed to the point of violence and they're walking into this aftermath. It's not necessarily thinking about like, "Oh, let's find clues and solve a crime here." The cops are just looking around for who's the big asshole here, who's the guy escalating and pushing everything. So, I find

that their approach to crime is super-... It's somewhere between neighborhood policing and the worst incompetency ever, depending on any given moment in which cop you get. The arbitrariness is so much about who is in that uniform on any given moment, on any given night, and there's that interesting nuance to it.

I'd love to see a film where you have a cop who understands there's drug dealing but understands there's a difference between malevolent drug dealers and benevolent drug dealers and can make those distinctions. That's an interesting... Or an NOPD officer who's African-American and grew up here and has friends and family in both sides of the law, for instance, would be a really interesting story to tell. I'm just tired of these white gazes at New Orleans basically falling to the "blacks as criminals" and the blacks tragedy kind of thing. The feeling is, "Oh, look. Black people. We should feel so sorry for them all the time." They never show the joy of the African-American experience here or the nuance of it. You hardly ever see their side of anything, and when you do see the joy, the positivity, it's always the second line. [Laughter] It's always Mardi Gras or dancing or whatever.

JB4: True.

RM: It's just so one note and there's just so many more New Orleans stories to tell that would benefit from a fresh perspective.

JB4: Oh, 100%. I mean, to a certain extent, we're still waiting on that. So, maybe that's the takeaway. I find a hard time getting inspired if I don't have anything to contribute that's unique and singular. Otherwise, why do it again, right? So, there's a moment, actually, that I loved. One of my favorite moments. We really didn't get a chance to talk about that. When they surrounded the house, and then Nic Cage goes through the neighbors, around, and then gets the sneak on the guy and he walks out and he goes, "I love it. I love it." It just seemed like such a genuine, of the moment thing that - there are a lot of moments like that in the film that I have to doff the cap to. Way more than the disappointing ones.

RM: Yes, I like that moment a lot too for a number of reasons. It shows that he's a good cop. I mean, we've seen him be a good cop on a couple of occasions, like the interrogation scene where he gets the information out of the guy simply by talking to him as a person instead of smacking him around like Val Kilmer was doing. We see him be a good cop again in that sense because the cops were about to run in with all their guns going and he gets them without a shot fired.

JB4: Yes, exactly.

RM: When he goes through the house, he drops that line to the young lady who lets him in like, "What are you doing here?" He's like, "Oh, I need to see the other side of this apartment." She says, "Why?" He says, "Unpaid rent," or something.

JB4: [Laughter] Yes, right.

RM: He's like he's working for the landlord, and then he helps himself to a bag of weed on the kitchen table.

JB4: Yes, exactly. [Laughter]

RM: I would love to take that scene and just build out a whole movie around that aesthetic, that storytelling logic, and the surprise of it, and the idea that ideally, there's a way for the police to have a relationship with their community that is just not so hostile or the police don't feel like an invasion or colonializing exterior force there to hold the community down.

JB4: That's a Netflix series right there. I mean, that theme alone is...

RM: Well, that's what Treme could've been.

JB4: Could've been, yes.

RM: That's The Wire in New Orleans.

JB4: Yes.

RM: To really break it all down. Dare to dream, someday.

JB4: We have to start a campaign with David Simon. Come on, man.

RM: Yes. He has a new HBO series, The Plot Against America, which takes place in the 30s, I want to say. So, maybe he's ready for another contemporary series.

JB4: I guess so, man. It's hard for me to get in the headspace to even watch that because it's scab picking and all the shit that we're dealing with right now and the federal government. Everything is so disruptive and cantankerous that - I mean, I've actually been welcoming more escapist fare or a more granular character-based fare. Like stuff that tries to deal with moral complexities of the anti-hero I'm sort of over, which is why this movie surprised me. I really enjoyed watching it a second time.

RM: Hashtag #thedarkesttimeline. I think you're not alone in wanting something a little lighter because the headlines and the social medias are out of control with the darkness right now.

JB4: It is.

RM: This is one of those make-or-break years, I think, for the American culture. If we don't come out of this year in a better place, especially with the election in November, then I think for a lot of people, this country is effectively over.

JB4: Yes, and it's incredibly difficult to - you don't want to get too hyperbolic, right? I've been to therapy on and off and the first thing you do is you fixate on something that's outside of your own sphere because it's easier to spin off conspiracy theories and shit on stuff that you have no direct hand in, but it's very difficult to figure out what those boundaries even are and not have a complete meltdown. It's very difficult not to

convey a sense of urgency to somebody who says something that you think is stupid.

[Laughter]

RM: Especially if what they say is reflecting an opinion held in a high office that you think is actively destroying the fabric of the country.

JB4: Yes, I mean...

RM: Because that's what I've been observing, that the political flare ups that I've been seeing on social media have a lot to do with people transferring their anxiety about the federal governments, and now, state government's too in this pandemic time, transferring those feelings onto individual people because they feel like their parroting, or they're not listening, or they represent the enemy or whatever. It's human nature, obviously, but the pandemic has made the isolation worse because we're all having to communicate now indirectly.

JB4: Right.

RM: Mediated interaction, which is terrible for interpretation and terrible for empathy.

JB4: It is.

RM: I don't know. It's like trying to put one shoe on while running a race while on fire.

JB4: [Laughter] That's as good a metaphor as I've ever heard.

RM: So, thanks for doing this. I really loved talking to you about this movie.

JB4: Yes, man.

RM: Tell me what you're working on these days. You have a podcast called Popcorn Piss and Vinegar that I love.

JB4: Thank you.

RM: I've been lucky enough to be a guest on it.

JB4: Yes, we're going to start that back up pretty soon. There's been a lot of really interesting things outside of the New Orleans cinema fair that I've discovered and enjoyed. There is a surge of really big budget stuff that they're like, "Well, fuck it." We're going to be the trail blazers on getting our box office from video-on-demand, and now, Marvel and all the big temples are now holding off on their release date until things are a little bit more back to normal. And so now, all the new movies are all these independents where the poster art is just two people. [Laughter] No, the coming sooners are all just similar types of movies. I've been going and revisiting some movies that I overlooked and one that I really enjoyed was called Extra Ordinary.

RM: Yes, I saw that at the Overlook Film Festival last year.

JB4: I've really, really enjoyed it. It was not anything I was expecting, and I've been singing it praises. Other than that...

RM: It's a good film. Did you watch it through the Broad St. theater thing or did you find it on your own?

JB4: No. I saw a video-on-demand recently, like last month.

RM: Interesting. The Broad St. theater was... that was one of their movies you could stream online but buy a ticket to support the theater through.

JB4: Oh, wow. Oh.

RM: It's a weird little program.

JB4: I didn't know that was even a thing.

RM: Not every theater is doing it.

JB4: I'll do that.

RM: I don't know if they're still doing it, but I know the Broad was doing it for a while, and if you go to Kino Lorber, the film distributor, their website has this massive list of all these independent films you can stream, and then all these independent theaters you can support and you can basically mix and match. You can stream anything, and then send that ticket money to an independent arthouse theater. So, that could be a great way to support the independent film economy.

JB4: I'm totally going to do that, and then also, I had planned during this to shoot a pilot that was essentially going to be Parks and Rec disguised as a ghost hunting show, but I initially wanted to call it Ghost Getters, but there is a ghost hunting outfit called that in a gag movie made by Jon Heder that's on Hulu that I discovered. So, that name's out.

RM: [Laughter] That's hilarious.

JB4: Then, Joe Cardosi and Duncan Pace are going to be in it. Pace came up with Fright Club, but that's what the team in Sabrina the Teenage Witch calls themselves. So, it's title to be decided, but that will be coming up sooner than later, hopefully. [01:00:00]

RM: That's not shot yet?

JB4: No, we haven't shot it yet.

RM: You've got a team and a script.

JB4: Team and a script.

RM: 2021.

JB4: 2021 probably, for sure. Yes.

RM: Awesome. Anything else you want to plug or shout out?

JB4: No, other than your movie Laundry Day, which I'm sure we'll talk about in the very near future.

RM: [Laughter] Well, I mean, its distribution deal contract is ending in July. I have a choice of re-upping, but I haven't decided. I'm on the fence. It's a big decision. I could try to self-distribute it or find another distributor or maybe find a boutique label in New Orleans, maybe a record label would want to help me put it out, do the soundtrack and we could... It's already in Louisiana Music Factory and stuff, but it would be fun to

have a local team behind it. On the other hand, it's amusing to me that you can buy it in Taiwan now.

JB4: Wow. [Laughter] That's so cool. I mean, we should explore this on a future episode.

RM: Yes. It's funny actually, because of the delay between recording and releasing these episodes, I actually realized what I just said. I may have made this decision by the time this airs. [Laughter]

JB4: Okay.

RM: Oh, well, that's cool. Well, thank you so much.

JB4: Certainly. Thank you.

RM: You can stream Bad Religion... "Bad Religion," Jesus, listen to me. [Laughter] You can stream Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans anywhere basically. It's on Prime. It's got Nicholas Cage. It's alternately exhilarating, bizarre, and hilarious, and there's a lot of animals in it.

JB4: Indeed.

RM: Two iguanas, tanks of goldfish, Japanese fighting fish. There's a stray dog and a dead alligator.

JB4: [Laughter] And a snake.

RM: [Laughter] Cool. Thank you, John.

JB4: Thank you.

RM: Subscribe. Rate. Review. Tell your friend. Et cetera. [Music]

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