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## 'X-FILES 2' DAY: The Story of a Set Visit

Source: *RopeofSilicon*

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Okay so it's happening like this. It's mid-February and Fox has shipped RopeofSilicon and a gang of other press folks out to visit the *X-Files 2* set. And we're inside a dank warehouse by some fairgrounds where rollercoasters loop across the horizon like red scribble. Not doing much of anything. No directions given other than to wait and not break anything. *And no photos please*. You'll be seeing the set soon enough and we'll work in interviews when we can. Great. Awesome. Fantastic. I need a breather anyway after that rocket ride through Vancouver our Elton John look-alike driver gave us. Nice guy though.

Now there's like 15 of us confined to one area. And the chatter -- the real topic of concern -- circles around whether the so-far unseen [Gillian Anderson](#) is still hot or not. After all, one of the journos says, she's almost like 40 now.

And even though we've only been inside 20 minutes or so, the claustrophobia revs up. Now I know the ceilings are like 50 feet high -- and how did that whiffle ball get caught up in the rafter wiring -- but anyway, two giant ceiling-to-floor canvases break up the building's space and we're pinned underneath the shadow of one.

Then there's the mist.

A knee-high smoke machine puffs away in the corner among dozens of black garbage bags stuffed with tree foliage. But I have no idea why the smoke machine is there. I mean it's not like the contraption is any where near the set. Did someone drop it on their way to the can and never pick it up? It's pluming damn good and right towards our lunch tables. Asphyxiation seems likely. And that'd make a fine story I'm sure.

We stand around some more pondering the Gillian enigma and comic books and "Battlestar Galatica" and huffing the vapors. Then a lean, well-groomed publicist in a fleece jacket and jeans like the rest of us comes our way. And he goes, alright we're doing the set visit now, okay? And we have a special tour guide: Frank Spotnitz, co-writer and producer on the movie.

And some of us are like, whoo neat-o. Better than a stuffy nobody towing us around.

Spotnitz appears out of nowhere like some ninja genie popping out from the lamp. Clad in all black hides him well in the shadow and fog and stuff. Plus he's a tad short, yet blessed with a great Johnny Depp-esque mane -- so I'm sure that makes up for the



whole height thing. He says hi and then we march toward the set all bunched up like a mob storming Frankenstein's castle for an exclusive before burning it down.

Past the canvas dividers the set's lights blind. And there, caged by ballooning mist from more smoke machines, stands the set.

### **A house.**

Just the ground level is built. An ivory, paint-chipped porch wraps around it. The thing looks like some kind of country-fried crackhouse. The type you could see Farmer John relaxing on the porch in his rocking chair after a hard day's work and then blazing up his corn cob crack pipe. Secrecy is of the utmost importance, but the owner of the house is revealed...



This is Fox Mulder's house, Spotnitz announces --

and as you've all probably heard we're trying very hard to protect the secrecy of this movie.

So I'm not going to tell you anything to ruin it.

But anything I do tell you, or anything that you do figure out about it, I really do appreciate it if you try to be discreet until the movie comes out.

We nod real angelic like -- fingers crossed -- and make sure our recorders are jammed so close to his goateed mouth they'll smell of his breath for days to come. Minty, I hope.

And he goes on chattering about how the house replicates a real one used for exteriors and for the story's setting it'll be somewhere around Washington D.C. in the winter. And Mulder has been hiding out here from the Feds for the last six years. And I'm like thinking, better not reveal any of that. Need to stay on the studio's good side and all.

So we enter the living room. Vintage rugs and books and shelving and furniture and all other sorts of old-fashioned knickknacks make up the decor. Lots of darks, creams, browns and wood. And Spotnitz is like, we did a number of things to try to make it feel like Mulder's home. So you'll notice the brown railing that goes around the living room. There was one just like that in his apartment. The feel of carpets and furniture is keeping with the type of furniture he had in his apartment in the show.

But I'm thinking, shit, with the exception of Mulder's pet goldfish and scattered newspapers and old copies of "Scientific American," this joint reminds me of a room in a funeral parlor. That side room you shuffle off to when you tire of staring at the stiff in the box and want to eat gingersnaps and drink mini cans of 7-Up.

Spotnitz leads us past a staircase going up to nowhere and towards a door in the back of the living room. I'm stuck in the rear of this wolf-pack and hear giggling ahead.

Oh.

We've just walked into the lair of a goddamn lunatic.

Dozens of pencils dangle from the ceiling like some absurd Indiana Jones death trap. Pine walls are blanketed with

hundreds of news clippings and photos and drawings with strings running across connecting them -- hey there's the monster from the black and white episode. Stacks of old "New York Times" stuffed in all crevices. *This is The X-Files Home Office*, says Spotnitz. As you can tell Mulder's a bit of a pack rat.

Sunflower seeds sit on the solid wood desk along with a pic of Mulder's sister and disheveled papers. Globes and maps and vintage books placed everywhere. Collections of dead tarantulas shadowboxed and displayed. And a Dell PC takes up a corner -- a PC in a Hollywood movie, truly a conspiracy is afoot. And of course, pinned to the wall in this visual cacophony is, as one journo gasps, "The Poster."

Yes, we're in the presence of the famous "I Want to Believe" UFO poster -- the badge of a man's virginity if hung in his bedroom. Who's had the poster for the last six years? I don't know, says Spotnitz. But it is one of the originals from the show.

Some try to goad Spotnitz in spilling details on the flick's story. C'mon tell us something. Anything. So Mulder and Scully been away from each other? Sorry, I can't confirm the way you worded that question. Yeesh!

I lean against a couple of tall, black filing cabinets. "Unexplained Files." Perhaps the script is in here. I'm tempted to peek, but Spotnitz herds us out from Mad Mulder's office into the room next door.

There's not a lot to tell about this. It's Mulder's bedroom obviously, says Spotnitz as a blonde woman attends to a pile of deco lying on a bed. Blue walls. Twigs and branches everywhere. Vases. Candles. Floral patterns. Hold up. Something's familiar about this place. Good God man, we're in my mother's bedroom. Too much elegance in here for a man. There's definitely a lady's touch to this. So I'm like, looks like there's a lady's touch in here. Is Mulder in a relationship?

And Spotnitz goes, I wish I could answer that.

The lady's touch is me, says the middle-aged woman in a thick Canadian accent. And everybody laughs it up.

Shirley Inget, our set decorator, says Spotnitz. She did the set decoration for *The X-Files* in Vancouver.

A few make small talk with her while we're allowed to explore the bedroom. Good. There's one thing I've been searching for since entering this pad: Mulder's infamous porn stash. All I see in here is a copy of D.H. Lawrence's "[Sons and Lovers](#)." Never read it. No idea what it's even about, but I'm pretty sure it's not "Jugs" for the intellectual crowd.

Then Spotnitz points to the side of the room and is like, bathroom's back there. Nothing remarkable about it except there's a scene that plays in there.

Well, that's remarkable enough for me and it's a logical place for the girlie mags too. Right on the toilet -- if indeed Mulder still subscribes to true bachelorhood. So I mosey over to the commode. It's a true horror flick crapper. Very clean. No porn. It's all bright white with hexagon floor tiles and one of those real big clawtubs that horror flicks love to fill full of the red stuff. Only thing missing is the smell of bleach.

So I'm beginning to think they didn't leave Mulder's smut out for us reporters to see. You know, maybe the man has moved on to the Internet like the rest of the world -- despite his house having nothing to do with the modern world.

We're shuffling off the set and past a kitchen full of old-style appliances -- a kitchen only slightly newer than the one Jackie Gleason would threaten a beat down for Audrey Meadows in -- when a reporter says, it looks like such a period house. 1920s or something. Sort of gives *The X-Files* a retro feel.

And Spotnitz goes, *yeah it's meant to be sort of timeless --*

Actually the one thing we tried to do in the series, and in the movies too, is give it a timeless quality. We don't want anything to feel fashionable or of the moment. We always intended for the series to wear well.

We gather at the bottom of the porch near some evergreens and encircle Spotnitz and toss more questions his way. This and that. This and that. No specific answers or anything. Can you say what familiar faces might be returning other than Mulder and Scully? Mitch Pileggi? And Spotnitz is like, *I can't say*.



Then out from the mist a massive, black beast ambles by us. Werewolf? No. Jesus Zeus, it's a poodle. On steroids... and growth hormones... and a steady diet of Canadian dwarves perhaps. No one seems to notice this. Too busy asking Spotnitz stuff. Or maybe they're use to seeing poodles large enough to play fetch with '91 Ford Fiestas. I don't know. And before I can even ask is that the movie's monster or is someone breeding Hulk poodles around here, the hellhound slinks gracefully back to the shadows and smog.

Spotnitz keeps talking. The fog is thickening. And hammers strike and echo from some hidden place in the building. Shadows coil and shunt off the hedges of fog like twisted steel sculptures and something's burning around here. I smell it. Maybe nothing. But are the smoke machines still running properly? No one can say.



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Our *X-Files 2* coverage doesn't end here. Be sure to read our interviews as well at the following links:

- [David Duchovny](#) (Fox Mulder)
- [Gillian Anderson](#) (Dana Scully)
- [Chris Carter](#) ("The X-Files" series creator, executive producer and *X-Files 2* producer, co-writer, and director)
- [Frank Spotnitz](#) ("The X-Files" series executive producer and *X-Files 2* producer and co-writer)
- [X-Files 2 Info Page](#)

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