

PRESS CONTACT

Randy Shaffer, Filmmaker & Producer
rlshafferwrites@gmail.com
440-376-8590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AKRON HORROR SHORT *CREAKS* PONDERS THE DARK

Filmmaker Randy Shaffer turns scientific mysteries, trauma, and a three-day filmmaking sprint into a 15-minute descent into pure darkness

AKRON, OHIO — August 30, 2026 – What if dark matter is not only alive, but what if it's trying to communicate with us? That's the unsettling premise behind ***Creaks***, a new supernatural suspense and found-footage horror short written, produced and directed by Akron filmmaker, **Randy Shaffer**.

In the 15-minute film, internet researcher and occultist YouTuber Martin Bloom investigates an online rumor that dark matter is alive and uses abstract sounds to communicate. As ordinary creaks and noises begin suggesting the presence of something beyond human perception, Martin discovers that some secrets are best left undisturbed—and that it isn't the darkness we should fear, but what comes out of it.

Although rooted in supernatural horror, Martin's investigation was inspired by real NASA research and scientific theories surrounding dark matter. ***Creaks*** turns humanity's limited perception of the universe into a disturbing question: **What if the unseen is aware of us?**

The film's production became nearly as intense as its story. Shaffer originally intended to shoot ***Creaks*** in May of 2026, but a life-threatening infection sidelined him for much of the summer. After recovering, he returned to the project facing rapidly approaching festival deadlines. The film was ultimately **shot, edited, scored, colored and mixed in roughly three days, August 11–13, 2026**, and completed August 14.

"I got right back to work and infused the fear of that traumatizing experience into Creaks," Shaffer says. *"What was once a casually paced shoot turned into a serious last-minute crunch. But that's filmmaking. The unpredictability—and spontaneous genius—of creative storytelling is one of my favorite things about making movies."*

Sound plays a central role in the film. Shaffer created the score using sound effects and deliberately out-of-tune instruments, taught himself **5.1 surround mixing**, and assembled a finished film containing more than **530 sound effects, effects and visual elements**. The concept itself was partly inspired by unexplained creaks, pings and pops Shaffer noticed in his own home, particularly noises that seemed to accompany moments of strong emotion.

Shot inside Shaffer and producer **Dana Curcio's Akron home**, ***Creaks*** intentionally utilizes iPhone cameras to capture a YouTube aesthetic, combined with practical and computer effects, and expressionistic lighting and color inspired by filmmaking icons, **Dario Argento** and **Mario Bava**. Shaffer stars as Martin Bloom, with Curcio appearing as **darkmatterconscience237**, a mysterious YouTuber. **Jake Richardson** serves as executive producer.

Creaks is both a self-contained short and a concept film for a potential feature-length expansion. It is also the first entry in ***The Split-Level Mysteries***, a planned trilogy of unrelated films shot in Shaffer and Curcio's own home.

Shaffer is a filmmaker, screenwriter, author, photographer, sound designer and marketing professional whose career has included work for **IGN, SeaWorld, Six Flags, Cedar Fair** and **Cutri Photo Arts**. He currently owns a freelance marketing and filmmaking business and creates short-form film content for **Clorox/Purell** social media platforms. He is the author of the bestselling short story ***The Horror*** and is currently working on a novelization for international rap artist **R.A. the Rugged Man**. His first feature-length film, completed in 2025, is currently in post-production. He is also working on his next horror short, ***Bedridden***.

FILM DETAILS: *Creaks* | Suspense / Thriller / Supernatural / Horror / Found Footage | 15 minutes, 19 seconds | United States | English | 4K | 16:9 | DCP Available | Completed August 14, 2026 | Production Budget: $500

CREDITS: Written & Directed by Randy Shaffer | Produced by Randy Shaffer and Dana Curcio | Executive Producer: Jake Richardson | Starring Randy Shaffer and Dana Curcio | Music, Sound Design, Sound FX Mixing & Visual Effects: Randy Shaffer

MEDIA & FESTIVAL INQUIRIES: Randy Shaffer, Writer / Director / Producer — *Creaks*. Press materials, screening links, interviews and festival information available upon request.

CREAKS (2026): Official Trailer | Official Teaser | Making of Documentary | Film Festival Page