

# 'Sanctum' Based On Screenwriter's Real Life Experience

February 3, 2011 9:40 PM

MIAMI (CBS4)- When a tropical storm forces a team of underwater cave divers deep into the caverns they find themselves fighting raging waters and terror as they search for an escape route to the sea.

The storyline is not an unfamiliar story to screenwriter Andrew Wight.

"I was a cave explorer and I was leading an expedition in Australia," Wight said. "And the last day of the expedition, we had this huge freak rainstorm. It flooded the cave and left 15 of us for two days underground."

Media were treated to a sneak peak of Sanctum inside a touring 90 seat cinetransformer truck with a 3-dimensional projection system, bringing audiences right into the caves.

"It is intense. It's deliberately intense," Wight said. "We wanted to give people an experience that perhaps they'd never think about going into a cave, but in the safety of an air conditioned theater you can have that intensity of experience and come away feeling like you've been somewhere."

The amazing 3D technology was invented by Wight's friend and colleague, director James Cameron for Avatar. Cameron is executive producer of Sanctum.



Sanctum hits theatres on Friday. (Source: SanctumMovie.com)

"After he finished that little movie called Titanic," Wight joked, "He went on a 10 year crusade to develop a camera system to film 3D. When they finished shooting Avatar he took the cameras off that set and used them to shoot Sanctum."

The result is one visually stunning ride with many of the scenes shot on location in Australia.

"It wasn't without risks," Wight said. "There were a lot of underwater re-breathers and full masks."

The terror you see on the actors' faces are real."

And when it comes to the actors, there are no big names. It was something the film makers made sure of.

"If you know the actor, you'll say, 'He's not a cave diver,'" Wight said. "But when there's an unfamiliar face you kind of wonder, 'are these people real?' That's what we wanted to do."

Sanctum is rated R and opens in theaters Friday.

(CBS4's Lisa Petrillo contributed material for this report)



Reporting Lisa Petrillo

**Filed Under**  
Entertainment

**Related Tags**  
3D, Andre Wight, Cave, Diving, James Cameron, Lisa Petrillo, movie, Sanctum