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## 5 Weird Things about STL Native and *Guardians of the Galaxy* Director James Gunn

Posted By Allison Babka on Fri, Aug 1, 2014 at 8:30 am



James Gunn | Instagram

James Gunn has a thing for raccoons.

*Guardians of the Galaxy*, the latest installment in the **Marvel Cinematic Universe**, begins its wide release Friday, August 1, and expectations are high. Why wouldn't they be? Critics and fans who attended previews for the film have been calling it Marvel's best work and one of the greatest superhero movies ever.

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And of course, it's a St. Louis guy behind the whole darn thing.

James Gunn, originally from Manchester, has been known for years as a master at combining horror with comedy, thanks to cutting his teeth at Z-film powerhouse Troma Entertainment and later writing the screenplay for the *Dawn of the Dead* remake and directing nerd hero Nathan Fillion in *Slither*. But directing and co-writing Marvel's *Guardians of the Galaxy* has brought on more attention and acclaim than any other project this Missouri boy has tackled yet.

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Many casual comic-book fans aren't that familiar with *Guardians of the Galaxy*, which pulls together a group of unlikely misfits -- including a foul-mouthed raccoon and, well, a tree -- to save worlds from annihilation by a power-hungry warlord. (Yes, it's very different from *The Avengers*.) Take a peek at **the trailer**:



But Gunn's adaptation of the source material has been winning people over -- enough to nab the writer/director job again **for the film's sequel**. As he did for many of his other movies, Gunn surrounded himself with talented friends to bring *Guardians of the Galaxy* to the screen, including his brother Sean Gunn (a frequent collaborator with James and who was best known as Kirk on

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*Gilmore Girls*), Michael Rooker (Merle of *The Walking Dead*), Troma co-founder Lloyd Kaufman and, of course, Fillion, who teased his *Guardians* cameo **during Wizard World St. Louis** back in April, just after helping **two lovebirds get engaged**.

By this point, most of Gunn's fans are familiar with the director's affinity for casting his friends and know that he attended Saint Louis University High School and Saint Louis University. But there may be a few more nuggets that even Gunn's most ardent admirers aren't aware of, so below, check out five weird things we dug up about one of St. Louis' most famous movie nerds.



Son of Groucho | Flickr

Back off, Groucho!

### 1. Gunn hates Groucho Marx impressions, cheap toilet paper and touchy-feely priests.

Tired of writing so many happy posts on his blog in 2006 (his sarcasm, not ours), Gunn decided to unleash his own dark side of the Force for the world to see. He meticulously composed **a list of "100 Things I Fucking Hate,"** which, as titled, was all about things that made Gunn barf. Well, maybe not barf, because that's a term the list shows that he hates. Other things Gunn was not fond of in 2006: touching poop, pregnant strippers, swollen glands, *The Phantom Menace* and these unfortunate bits about his personal history in St. Louis:

10) Monsignor Russell J. Obmann, the pastor at my grade school, St. Joseph's in Manchester, Missouri, who gave the young boys in my class alcohol and showed them porn, and probably other stuff as well. He was later caught having sex with a male student, but was only reprimanded by the Catholic Church. Now he's dead.

11) The fact that we all told our parents that Russell J. Obmann was doing this shit, but they thought we were being silly and making up stories because he was a dick even outside of being a child molestor.

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## 2. He had a superhero raccoon before *Guardians of the Galaxy*.

You think Rocket is Gunn's first foray into fur? Guess again. Back in 2008 Gunn was part of a series on Xbox Live called *Horror Directors Do Comedy*, wherein visionary kings of blood -- including with *Saw*'s James Wan, *Hatchet*'s Adam Green and others -- served up hilarious one-offs. One of Gunn's projects was *Sparky & Mikaela*, which **paired a hot girl with a rodent to fight crime**. Gunn's thoughts:

I know what you're thinking. Really, James? Another sexy teen superheroine/puppet raccoon crime-fighting team in a world where raccoons have persecuted human beings for hundreds of years? What can I say? Sometimes you just have to follow the trends to make a buck.

On page two, see photos of weird stuff in Gunn's parents' home.

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