

**ELEVATION  
PICTURES**  
PRESENTS

# CLOSET MONSTER

WRITTEN and DIRECTED by **STEPHEN DUNN**

a **RHOMBUS MEDIA** and **BEST BOY ENTERTAINMENT** production



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# STRAND RELEASING

## CLOSET MONSTER

by **Stephen Dunn**

Canada, 2015, 90 minutes, English, Coming-of-Age Drama

Elevation Pictures presents a Rhombus Media and Best Boy Entertainment production, written and directed by Stephen Dunn and starring Connor Jessup (*BLACKBIRD*, *FALLING SKIES*) in the coming of age drama, *CLOSET MONSTER*.

Also starring in the film are Aaron Abrams (*HANNIBAL*, *YPF*), Joanne Kelly (*WAREHOUSE 13*, *HOSTAGES*), Aliocha Schneider (*THREE NIGHT STAND*), Jack Fulton (*LIFE*, *PAY THE GHOST*), Sofia Banzhaf (*SILENT RETREAT*), Mary Walsh (*THE HOUR HAS 22 MINUTES*, *THE GRAND SEDUCTION*), and Isabella Rossellini (*BLUE VELVET*, *ENEMY*) as a talking hamster named Buffy.

*CLOSET MONSTER* tells the story of Oscar Madly (Jessup), a creative and driven teenager who hovers on the brink of adulthood. Destabilized by his dysfunctional parents, unsure of his sexuality, and haunted by horrific images of a tragic gay bashing he witnessed as a child, Oscar dreams of escaping the town he feels is suffocating him. A talking hamster, imagination and the prospect of love help him confront his surreal demons and discover himself.

*CLOSET MONSTER* marks the debut feature film for writer/director Stephen Dunn (*POP UP PORNO*, *WE WANTED MORE*, *LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME*). The film is an official Ontario-Newfoundland co-production, produced by Kevin Krikst (*METHOD*, *PARACHUTE*) and Fraser Ash (*DUST*) of Rhombus Media in Toronto and Edward J. Martin (*MICKEY'S FARM*, *SAVE MY PET*) of Best Boy Entertainment in Mount Pearl. Executive Producers Niv Fichman (*ENEMY*, *THE RED VIOLIN*) and Ed Martin (*MICKEY'S FARM*, *SAVE MY PET*), director of photography Bobby Shore csc (*GOON*, *BANG BANG BABY*), production designer Lisa Soper (*HOUSE AT THE END OF THE STREET*, *THE DAY*), editor Bryan Atkinson (*GUIDANCE*, *HOLE*), casting director Deirdre Bowen (*MAPS TO THE STARS*, *ENEMY*), and composers Maya Postepski (of the musical group *AUSTRA*) and Todor Kobakov (*THE HUSBAND*, *HELLIONS*) complete the creative team.

*CLOSET MONSTER* is produced with the participation of Telefilm Canada, the Newfoundland & Labrador Film Development Corporation, The Harold Greenberg Fund and Rogers Telefund.

## **Film Specs:**

Production Country(ies): Canada  
Year: 2015  
Language: English  
Genre: Coming-of-Age Drama  
Subtitle Language: None at this time  
Format: HD  
Running Time: 90 minutes  
Color/Bw: Color  
Aspect Ratio: 1.85:1  
Frame Rate: 23.98  
Sound Ratio: 5.1  
Originally Shot on: Arri Alexa (and 35mm)

## **Credits (crew):**

Directed by	Stephen Dunn
Written by	Stephen Dunn
Produced by	
Producers	Kevin Krikst Fraser Ash Edward J. Martin
Executive Producers	Niv Fichman Ed Martin
Line Producer	Chris Hatcher
Original Music by	Maya Postepski Todor Kobakov
Cinematography by	Bobby Shore csc
Film Editing by	Bryan Atkinson
Casting by	Deirdre Bowen
Production Design by	Lisa Soper
Costume Design by	Melanie Oates
Production Company	Rhombus Media Best Boy Entertainment

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## Cast:

Connor Jessup	as	Oscar Madly
Aaron Abrams	as	Peter Madly
Joanne Kelly	as	Brin Madly
Aliocha Schneider	as	Wilder
Sofia Banzhaf	as	Gemma
Jack Fulton	as	Young Oscar
with Mary Walsh	as	Allison
and Isabella Rossellini	as	Buffy

## Logline/tagline:

A coming of age drama about Oscar Madly, a creative and driven teenager, desperate to escape his hometown and the haunting memories of his turbulent childhood.

## Short Synopsis:

Oscar Madly hovers on the brink of adulthood - destabilized by his dysfunctional parents, unsure of his sexuality, and haunted by horrific images of a tragic gay bashing he witnessed as a child. A talking hamster, imagination and the prospect of love help him confront his surreal demons and discover himself.

## Synopsis:

Oscar Madly is an imaginative “only-child” in St. John, Newfoundland, whose closest friend is a pet hamster named Buffy. If his life wasn’t challenging enough being caught in the middle of his parents’ turbulent divorce, Oscar is viciously catapulted into adulthood when his father teaches him about a shocking hate-crime involving a young gay man. Fearing that he too might be gay, Oscar is driven to suppress his femininity. But when Oscar comes of age, his resistance to his sexuality weakens as he forms a tenuous friendship with a tattooed co-worker from Montreal who opens his eyes to a whole world of new possibilities. However, as Oscar begins to reclaim his identity, he experiences confusing sexual fantasies about his new friend that are fueled by fear. When Oscar finally confronts and triumphs against the fear instilled by his father, the result is an explosive spectacle of human empowerment unlike anything Oscar could have ever expected.

## About the Director:

Stephen Dunn is an award-winning filmmaker and graduate of Norman Jewison’s Canadian Film Centre and Ryerson University’s Film Program. His thesis film, *LIFE DOESN’T FRIGHTEN ME*, starring Gordon Pinsent, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and has won numerous awards, including the Student Visionary Award at the Tribeca Film Festival and Best Live Action Film at the TIFF Student Film Showcase. He is the youngest filmmaker ever selected for the TIFF Talent Lab where he won two TIFF RBC INTERNATIONAL EMERGING FILMMAKER AWARDS for his film, *SWALLOWED*. In 2009 he attended the Cannes Film Festival - Short Film Corner with his film, *THE HALL*, where film critic Roger Ebert highlighted him as an upcoming filmmaker to watch.

His collection of short films *POP UP PORNO* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and screened at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2015. His first feature, *CLOSET MONSTER*, produced by Rhombus Media, premiered and won the Best Canadian Film Award at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival.

His next feature *WHAT WAITS FOR THEM IN DARKNESS* received the Kenneth Rainin Foundation Filmmaking Grant from the San Francisco Film Society and is currently in development with Rhombus Media.

## Director’s Selected Filmography:

- 2015 *Closet Monster* (feature)
- 2015 *Pop Up Porno* (series of short films)
- 2014 *We Wanted More* (short)
- 2012 *Life Doesn’t Frighten Me* (short)

## Director's Statement:

Perhaps it was my platonic love affair with the Spice Girls, or maybe my impeccably accurate Buffy the Vampire Slayer Halloween costume, but somehow it was blatantly obvious to the entire island of Newfoundland, even at six-years old, that I would grow up to be a fabulously gay young man.

Obvious to everyone, that is, except me.

Planting seeds as a flamboyant "only child" in the not-so multicultural St. John's, Newfoundland, might seem to have been problematic for a kid in my position... But that was not the case. I was extremely fortunate to have been nurtured by a particularly urban-minded mother who appeased my "creative" nature by secretly returning with me to McDonalds so I could exchange my Hot Wheels Happy Meal toy for the miniature Barbie option when my father wasn't looking. I was the happiest kid you could have ever met.

For many years I was comfortable in my own skin, oblivious to my alternative gender preferences until an event occurred that turned my world upside down and caught the attention of the entire province...

A young gay man was violently impaled with a metal rod in the graveyard behind my school.

Even though I didn't know I was gay, I began to suppress my femininity and concealed a dark part of myself until I was eighteen. It was my struggle to survive as I searched for my identity as a young gay man that has driven me to make *Closet Monster*.

## The "Hart" of Oscar:

Stephen Dunn wrote the very first draft of *Closet Monster* while at one of Toronto's oldest and most celebrated buildings, a place called Hart House. Established in 1919 as a part of the University of Toronto, Hart House was conceived as a place for cultural, intellectual and recreational functions alike, and sits in the center of the city embodying a high degree of stylistic unity through the calm, monumental impression it creates. So it should come as no surprise that it was Hart House that first lured Dunn in to scribe Oscar's world.

"I wrote the first draft of the script over three weeks at Hart House, and while I was there I kept seeing these total nerds coming in and playing these weird board games – it happened several times," Dunn humorously recounts. "And each time they came, I noticed that Connor was there. I didn't know him then, and he didn't have any idea who I was. But I was basically writing the character of Oscar during this time, and creating this character while Connor was actually in the room with me. So I guess I just had him in my head a little bit while I was writing."

As Connor Jessup remembers, "at the exact same time that Stephen was writing, I was there playing a board game with this club – I was a shameless geek," he laughs. "He would be writing his script and looking up, and apparently I would be sitting there on the other end of the room. So I guess we kind of got pulled together that way. And then a year later, I got sent the script and read it and fell in love with it right away."

"We ended up meeting afterwards, and really clicked," Dunn admits. "He's a really intelligent, really incredible, focused and serious actor. I feel so lucky to have him at the helm."

## Isabella Rossellini as Buffy the Hamster:

One of *Closet Monster*'s more whimsical and charming elements is no doubt Oscar's closest friend, a talking hamster named Buffy – with a European accent, no less.

"Growing up, I always used to give identities and character traits to my animals," recounts Dunn. "In retrospect, I realize what I was doing was giving a part of my own personality to my pets. So to me, Buffy represents a different side of Oscar; that part of Oscar that's been hidden, that has been repressed inside of him after his parents separated and after he witnesses that hate crime. So I've always looked at the film in a way that Oscar's personality is divided and split into two living beings. And it's not until Oscar loses Buffy that he's able to obtain himself again." Given the significance of this character, it was always imperative for Stephen to find the ideal voice for Buffy.

As the filmmakers were immersed in the world of post-production, they began to give this some serious thought, until Dunn was struck with an epiphany. “I have an idea,” he somewhat nervously shares with producers, unsure of how they might react to his outside-the-box notion, “what if we approach Isabella Rossellini to play Buffy?” And as it happens, Ms. Rossellini is a close friend of Executive Producer Niv Fichman. He thought the idea was brilliant.

“I really don’t work anymore as an actress,” admits Rossellini, in a 2014 interview with *The Telegraph*. “I am old, and there are no roles for older people. If a friend calls and asks me to do something, then of course I do it because I want to be with them, but it’s never a career move.” So when Fichman reached out to Rossellini to ask her to voice Oscar’s furry friend, she immediately said yes, without hesitation.

As it turns out, Rossellini is no stranger to playing a hamster. In her GREEN PORNO series, she hilariously dressed up in a hamster costume and “gave birth” to ten baby hamsters, consuming a few along the way. Dunn has always been a massive fan of Rossellini, and especially of her GREEN PORNO series, which actually inspired him to create his own short film series POP UP PORNO (which premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival).

“Working with Isabella was a dream come true,” Dunn exclaims. “Easily the best day of my life. I’m so grateful to have had this incredible opportunity to work with her and lend her voice to Buffy the hamster.”

Or as Rossellini affectionately, and perhaps somewhat mischievously decrees, “I am the voice of an ’amster.”

## Filming in Newfoundland:

Born and raised in St. John’s, Newfoundland, it was very important to Dunn that he return to his roots to shoot his first feature film at home. “I love Newfoundland cinema,” he explains, “We’ve had such a strong history here of creating unique voices and stories. But I’ve actually never seen a film set in St. John’s that shows a more modern aspect of what it’s like to grow up as a young teen in an urban environment, but that is still isolated on an island. It is a very unique city.”

“I’m honestly happy with whatever we shoot in Newfoundland,” admits St. John’s-native Mary Walsh, who also plays Oscar’s boss Allison in the film. “However, I’m especially thrilled that Stephen decided to come home to do *Closet Monster*, because he could have done it in some small town in Ontario and pretended it was here. Or even just set it somewhere else altogether. But they say in specificity is how things become universal. So specifically setting this story in St. John’s will help make his film more universal.”

As Dunn attests, “there is a sense of culture and community that is unlike any other city in Canada. I wanted to show a side of this island that I grew up in. I wanted to show the more modern aspects of what it’s like to party downtown, to grow up in the downtown St. John’s and Mount Pearl area. So to me, that was also an important part of the storytelling and capturing the life and energy of this city. It has been so incredible to be able to come back to St. John’s to film *Closet Monster* - to tell this story in my home town, to visit the places where I grew up - it has been an absolutely thrilling experience.”

## Cast Biographies:

### Connor Jessup (as Oscar Madly)

An actor and filmmaker from a young age, Connor Jessup is best known for his role as Ben Mason in TNT's post-apocalyptic sci-fi series FALLING SKIES, produced by Steven Spielberg. In 2012, Jessup starred on the big screen as the lead in the independent film BLACKBIRD, about the struggles of a troubled teen arrested for a crime he didn't commit. The film premiered to acclaim at the Toronto International Film Festival, with his performance earning him the “Rising Star” accolade from the festival. In the summer of 2014, Connor completed production on the independent feature CLOSET MONSTER, a coming-of-age drama in which he plays Oscar Madly, a boy desperate to escape his hometown, his broken family and the ghosts of a turbulent childhood. Named one of VARIETY’s “Actors to Watch” in their Power of Youth issue, he is also a writer, producer and director. In addition to several of his own short films, Jessup

executive produced the independent film AMY GEORGE, which played at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2011.

Aaron Abrams (as Peter Madly)

Aaron Abrams has appeared in regular/recurring roles for many television series, including the critically acclaimed *Slings & Arrows*, the Emmy® nominated *The State Within*, the CW's *Runaway*, ABC's *Rookie Blue*, *Stargate: Atlantis*, *Longmire* and currently he can be seen every week on *Hannibal* on NBC.

Aaron also starred in *The L.A. Complex* for the CW and the film *Young People Fucking*, both of which he wrote and produced. Aaron can be seen starring opposite Ethan Hawke and Emma Watson in the upcoming film *Regression*.

Joanne Kelly (as Brin Madly)

Joanne Kelly, from Bay D'Espoir, Newfoundland, will next be seen in the A&E series *The Returned* and as the lead in the feature film *Runoff*, which will be released in Spring 2015. *Runoff*, directed by Kimberly Levin, premiered at the 2014 LA Film Festival.

Kelly has found success in both film and television with leading roles in projects such as *Hostages*, *Warehouse 13*, *Diamonds*, *Last Stop, Vanished*, *Playing House*, *Whiskey Echo*, *Slings and Arrows*, *Jeremiah*, *Remembering Phil*, *Extraction*, *Going The Distance*, and the critically acclaimed *The Bay of Love and Sorrows*. Joanne's theatre credits include "Romeo and Juliet", "Julius Caesar", "Macbeth", "Measure for Measure", "Seven Stories", and "Oleanna", and "Proof" both of which she also produced.

Kelly has been nominated for two Gemini's in her career: one for her lead role in the Mini-Series *Diamonds*, and the other for her lead role in the Mini-Series, *Playing House*.

Aliocha Schneider (as Wilder)

Aliocha Schneider is a versatile young actor, born in Paris and raised in Quebec.

After starting his career in theatre, Aliocha made his big screen debut in Erik Canuel's box office hit *BON COP, BAD COP*. In Quebec he has since appeared in the films *MA MERE EST CHEZ LE COIFFUER* directed by Lea Pool, *LE JOURNAL D'AURELIE LAFLAMME* by Christian Laurence and *4 SOLDATS* by Robert Morin. And the television series *TACTIK*, *YAMASKA*, *LES PARENTS* and *LE JEUNES LOUP*.

Recent credits include the French films *VILLE-MARIE* by Guy Édoin opposite Monica Bellucci and *THE TOURNAMENT* by Elodie Namer. Along with the english language films *THREE NIGHT STAND*, written and directed by Pat Kiely with Sam Huntington, Meaghan Rath and Emmanuelle Chriqui, and Stephen Dunn's debut *CLOSET MONSTER*.

Sofia Banzhaf (as Gemma)

Sofia Banzhaf is a Toronto-based filmmaker, writer and actor. She has appeared in several short films, feature films, and television, including the award-winning *Silent Retreat* and CBC's *Republic of Doyle*. Recent collaborations include works with Ashley McKenzie (*Rhonda's Party*, *When You Sleep*), Nicole Dorsey (*Ivabelle*) and William Kyle Gerardi (*kami*, *The Game Store*). Her fiction has been published in *NU magazine*, *Metatron*, and she has a forthcoming novella released by *Anstruther Press*. She is in post-production on her first feature.

Jack Fulton (as Young Oscar)

Jack Fulton, a young actor from Toronto, portrays Young Oscar in Rhombus Media's film "Closet Monster", directed by Stephen Dunn.

Since he was first introduced to the industry in 2012, Jack has shot several commercials, including "Sky TV" with Robin Williams. He transitioned easily into film and television, landing the lead role alongside Gordon Pinsent in the Canadian Film Centre production of *Night Light*, also directed by Stephen Dunn. He went on to shoot guest spots on *Saving Hope*, *12 Monkeys* and *His Turn* as well as recurring roles on *Lucky 7*, *Hemlock Grove* and *Odd Squad*.

Most recently, he played the son of Nicolas Cage in *Pay the Ghost*, and Robert Pattinson's son in *Life*. He has also worked alongside James Franco in *Every Thing Will Be Fine*.

On top of his passion for acting, Jack does a crazy good British accent, and loves everything Elvis.

Jack Fulton is represented by Vanderwerff Talent in Toronto, Canada.

### Mary Walsh (as Allison)

No stranger to television audiences, Mary Walsh may be best known for her work on *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, CBC's wildly popular take on current affairs. The series, which she also created, earned her many of her numerous Gemini awards and showcased her dynamic range of characters, including the flagrantly outspoken 'Marg Delahunty'.

Walsh also won two Gemini awards (one for writing, one for performance) for her comedy series *Hatching, Matching and Dispatching*, and was nominated for two other Genies for her performances in feature films *Crackie* (Official selection at TIFF) and *New Waterford Girl*.

Walsh's recent credits include CBC's *Republic of Doyle*, HBO Canada's *Sensitive Skin*; and Global's *Rookie Blue*.

Select feature film credits include *Mambo Italiano*; *The Divine Ryans* with *Pete Postlethwaite*; *Violet*, in which she played the title role; and most recently the *The Grand Seduction* (Official selection at TIFF).

Among her many awards and doctorates, Mary is also the recipient of the Order of Canada.

### Isabella Rossellini (as Buffy)

Isabella Rossellini grew up in Paris and Rome. At the age of 19, she moved to New York, where she became a translator and later a reporter for RAI-Italian Television. Her popular segments led to appearances as the New York correspondent for the weekly Italian comedy show THE OTHER SUNDAY, with Roberto Benigni.

At the relatively advanced age of 28, Rossellini began a modeling career when she was photographed by Bruce Weber for British Vogue and by Bill King for American Vogue. She has since worked with the industry's most distinguished photographers - from Richard Avedon to Steven Meisel, from Helmut Newton to Peter Lindbergh, from Norman Parkinson to Eve Arnold. She has appeared on the cover of such magazines as Vogue, Elle, Marie Claire, Bazaar and Vanity Fair. An exhibition of photographs of Rossellini, *Portrait of a Woman*, was held in March 1988 at the Museum of Modern Art of the city of Paris.

Isabella wrote, directed and starred in a series of shorts called GREEN PORNO, about the reproducing habits of various bugs, insects and other animals. The shorts are comical, but insightful study of the curious ways certain animals "make love" featuring Isabella in colorful, vibrant costumes. GREEN PORNO premiered at the 2008 Tribeca Film Festival and launched on Sundance Channel later that same year. For her work with GREEN PORNO, Isabella won herself a Webby Award for "Best Individual Performance".

In 2014, adapted from the success of her Sundance Channel series, Rossellini created an on-stage one woman show in which she acts out panoply of reproductive oddities: the praying mantis that consumes its partner while copulating; the male bee who loses his penis in the act; and the shrimp, whose foreplay involves it shimmying seductively out of its shell. Part nature documentary, part DIY cartoon, GREEN PORNO is a cheeky, delightful zoology lesson brought vividly to life by Rossellini's singular flair for storytelling. Debuted in the US at BAM Theater in Brooklyn, she is currently traveling Europe and Australia with the show.

Isabella made her cinematic debut in 1979 in Paolo and Vittorio Taviani's IL PRATO (THE MEADOW). Her American film debut was opposite Mikhail Baryshnikov and Gregory Hines in Taylor Hackford's WHITE NIGHTS. In 1986, she starred opposite Dennis Hopper as Dorothy Vallens, the tortured lounge singer, in David Lynch's haunting and controversial BLUE VELVET.

Her other film credits include, ENEMY, THE ACCIDENTAL HUSBAND, MY DAD IS 100 YEARS OLD, THE ARCHITECT, THE FEAST OF THE GOAT, HAVE YOU HEARD, THE SADDEST MUSIC IN THE WROLD, ROGER DOGER, COUSINS, ZELLY AND ME, WILD AT HEART, DEATH BECOMES HER, FEARLESS, WYATT EARP, BIG NIGHT, THE IMPOSTORS and THE FUNERAL. Her portrait of the Jewish Hassidic mother in LEFT LUGGAGE directed by Jeroen Krabbe, won a special award at the Berlin Film Festival in 1998.

In television, Isabella was most recently seen on NBC's THE BLACK LIST and has appeared on several episodes of ABC's ALIAS. She also starred in the television movie, MONTE WALSH for TNT opposite Tom Selleck and in NAPOLEON for A & E opposite Gerard Depardieu and John Malkovich. Other television credits include THE BLACKLIST, MERLIN, DON QUIXOTE, THE ODYSSEY, THE FRIGHTENING FRAMMIS, THE GIFT, CRIME OF THE CENTURY (Golden Globe nomination) and CHICAGO HOPE (Emmy Nomination).

On stage, she made her American-theater debut in Spring 2004 in Terrence McNally's off-Broadway play THE STENDHAL SYNDROME.

Rossellini's modeling and acting career also led her into the world of cosmetics. Beginning in 1982, she was the exclusive spokesperson for the international cosmetics brand Lancome for 14 years. In 1990, Lancome launched the very successful fragrance Tresor, which was Rossellini's first involvement with product development. In 1995, Isabella began collaboration with Lancaster Group to develop her own brand of cosmetics, Manifesto, which launched internationally in May 1999.

Rossellini's photographic book, "Looking At Me," is currently in stores. Her self-described fictional memoir "Some of Me" was published in the USA in 1997. The book has since also been published in Italian, German and French language editions. Also in 1997, the George Eastman House (USA) honored Rossellini for her work in preserving the films of her parents, Ingrid Bergman and Roberto Rossellini.

Isabella also wrote a book about her father entitled IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE DAUGHTER AND THE HOLY SPIRITS: REMEMBERING ROBERTO ROSSELLINI. Haus Publishing released the book in May 2006. Additionally, the Museum of Modern Art had a retrospective on Roberto Rossellini at the end of 2006.

Isabella is very involved in Wildlife Conservation. The Disney Conservation Fund just awarded Isabella for her commitment to this by giving her \$100,000 to donate to a conservation organization of her choice. She is also a volunteer for the Guide Dog Foundation and trains puppies for their program.

Rossellini lives in New York City with her two children.

## **Filmmaker Biographies:**

### **Kevin Krikst (Producer)**

A graduate of Ryerson University's Image Arts Film Studies program, Kevin Krikst has worked steadily in the film and television industry since 2007. Upon graduating, Kevin joined the team at Rhombus Media to work under the mentorship of renowned Canadian producer Niv Fichman. Over the past 8 years, he has been a part of a number of feature films and television series, including Francois Girard's SILK, Fernando Meirelles' BLINDNESS, Paul Gross' PASSCHENDAELE, Jason Eisener's HOBO WITH A SHOTGUN, Brandon Cronenberg's ANTIVIRAL, Denis Villeneuve's ENEMY, and for television MICHAEL: TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS and SENSITIVE SKIN.

Now working as a Producer at Rhombus, Kevin continues broaden his experience, having produced a number of short films and documentaries, including Gregory Smith's METHOD, which premiered at the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival, and Peter Stebbings' PARACHUTE, which premiered at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival. Recent credits include: Producer on CLOSET MONSTER, the debut feature film from Stephen Dunn, a haunting coming-of-age drama starring Connor Jessup and Isabella Rossellini; Co-Producer on INTO THE FOREST, a new film by Patricia Rozema, adapted from the book by Jean Hegland, starring Ellen Page, Evan Rachel Wood, Max Minghella and Callum Keith Rennie; Associate Producer on HYENA

ROAD, an Afghanistan-set war film by Paul Gross, starring Rossif Sutherland, Paul Gross, Allan Hawco and Christine Horne; and Associate Producer on ZOOM, the debut feature film from Pedro Morelli, a multi-interface comedy starring Gael García Bernal, Alison Pill and Jason Priestley.

Awards include the Norman Jewison Filmmaker Award in 2006, “Best Film” and “People’s Choice” at the 2007 enRoute Student Film Festival hosted by Air Canada for UPSIDE-DOWN GIRL, and two nominations for the Yorkton Film Festival’s Golden Sheaf Awards, “Best Drama” in 2013 for FOLLOW and “Best Short Subject” in 2014 for METHOD.

#### Fraser Ash (Producer)

Fraser Ash is a producer of feature films, television series and documentaries.

Originally from Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Fraser attended Queen’s university to pursue a degree in Philosophy with a minor in Film Studies. In 2005 he was a visiting student at the University of Edinburgh, and upon his return was awarded the Dean’s Special Award for students returning from exchange.

After graduation, Fraser was Executive Assistant to the former Governor General of Canada, the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, where he worked closely in her capacity as former Governor-General, Founder and Co-Chair of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, Colonel-in-Chief of the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry, author, public speaker and patron of the arts.

Since 2010, he has been at Rhombus Media, a production company in Toronto that has been producing feature films, documentaries and performing arts programs since 1979. In his capacity as a producer, Fraser helps oversee all development, business affairs, production finance, and works closely with our distribution and sales partners to manage marketing and promotional activities.

Fraser most recently worked as an associate producer of the feature ENEMY directed by Denis Villeneuve and starring Jake Gyllenhaal, which premiered at TIFF in 2013. He is a co-producer on the series SENSITIVE SKIN starring Kim Cattrall and Don McKellar, which premiered on The Movie Network and Movie Central in Canada in 2014 and won four Canadian Screen Awards; and he was supervising producer of the documentary OUR MAN IN TEHRAN which premiered at TIFF in 2013 and won five Canadian Screen Awards.

Coming up in 2015 are the releases of four feature films of which he was a producer: ZOOM, directed by Pedro Morelli; CLOSET MONSTER, directed by Stephen Dunn; HYENA ROAD, directed by Paul Gross; INTO THE FOREST, directed by Patricia Rozema. Also, upcoming are second seasons of SENSITIVE SKIN and CBC’s MICHAEL: TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS.

#### Edward J. Martin (Producer)

Edward J. Martin is the president of television and film production company Best Boy Entertainment and interactive media developer Clockwork Fox Studios. He has produced several television series, including *Save My Pet* (Animal Planet, The Pet Network), *Soccer Shrines* (The Cave and Go!TV), and *Mickey’s Farm* (The Pet Network). Clockwork Fox Studios recently launched a game-based learning program called *Zorbit’s Math Adventure*, which will be distributed by Scholastic Education. *Closet Monster* is his first feature film.

#### Niv Fichman (Executive Producer)

Niv Fichman is one of the founding partners of Rhombus Media in Toronto. The company’s 30-year history has yielded a rich compilation of feature films, documentaries, performing art films and series television. Their dedication to excellence is reflected in the awards their projects have garnered: an Oscar, seven Emmys, numerous Genies, Geminis and Screen Awards, Golden Pragues as well as a Golden Rose of Montreux and a Prix Italia.

Niv’s most recent projects include: ZOOM (2014), a multi-dimensional interface between a comic book artist, a novelist and a film director. This is the first feature film directed by Pedro Morelli and the second international co-production between Rhombus Media and Brazil’s O2 Filmes. Patricia Rozema’s INTO THE FOREST (2014), based on the acclaimed novel by Jean Hegland stars Ellen Page and Evan Rachael Wood.

Denis Villeneuve's *ENEMY* (2013) starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Mélanie Laurent, Sarah Gadon and Isabella Rossellini, which had its world premiere at the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival; *OUR MAN IN TEHRAN* (2013), a documentary exploring Canada's role during the 1979 hostage crisis in Iran; *HOBO WITH A SHOTGUN* (2011) starring Rutger Hauer, exploded onto the scene premiering in the Sundance Festival's midnight section; Fernando Meirelles' adaptation of Nobel Laureate Jose Saramago's *BLINDNESS* (2008), written by Don McKellar and starring Julianne Moore, Mark Ruffalo, Danny Glover, and Gael Garcia Bernal opened the 2008 Cannes Film Festival; Paul Gross' World War I romantic epic *PASSCHENDAELE* (2008) was the top grossing Canadian film of 2008 and received the Best Picture Genie. Niv is currently completing postproduction on *SENSITIVE SKIN* (2014), a new TV series by Don McKellar starring Kim Cattrall, as well as McKellar himself.

Fichman has previously produced renowned directors such as François Girard, Olivier Assayas, Guy Maddin, Don McKellar, Peter Mettler, Peter Wellington, Kevin McMahon, Marc Evans, as well as Paul Gross. Other selected feature films include *THE RED VIOLIN*, *THIRTY TWO SHORT FILMS ABOUT GLENN GOULD*, *LAST NIGHT*, *THE SADDEST MUSIC IN THE WORLD*, *SNOWCAKE* and *SILK*. Selected television projects include *SLINGS & ARROWS*, *YO-YO MA: INSPIRED BY BACH* and *SEPTEMBER SONGS*.

In June 2007, Niv Fichman was named the Canadian Producer of the Year by the CFTPA and was honoured by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association in 2011.

#### Ed Martin (Executive Producer)

Ed Martin, founder and CEO of Best Boy Entertainment, is a serial entrepreneur with over 30 years experience in art and management. He has produced 9 television series, several interactive projects, and has written and directed numerous documentaries and stage plays. His interactive company, Clockwork Fox Studios, recently signed a distribution deal with Scholastic Education for eLearning product *Zorbit's Math Adventure*. Ed was a finalist for the 2014 Ernst & Young Atlantic Entrepreneur of the Year Awards. *Closet Monster* is his first feature film.

#### Chris Hatcher (Line Producer)

Chris Hatcher is a Toronto based Producer and Line Producer. Born and raised in Newfoundland, Hatcher was always creatively driven. Immersed in the arts community from a young age, he planted a seed on the stage, that blossomed in front of the camera and that has now ripened at the helm of production, as a producer and line producer.

In 2008, Hatcher was awarded Best Producer after completing his program at the Toronto Film School. After producing various short films, such as: *ATTACHMENTS*, which had its world premier at the Oscar qualifying Rhode Island International Film Festival in 2012, and *LOVE, SAM* which was awarded Best Canadian Short at the Edmonton International Film Festival in 2013, Hatcher, spent some time in India as a director and producer of the documentary *EYE INDIA*, on behalf of the NGO; Unit For Sight.

Upon his return, Hatcher dove into the world of film and television production. He line produced films such as; *Cast No Shadow*, which was nominated for Best Film and the Canadian Screen Awards 2014 and *Bang Bang Baby*, which was awarded Best First Feature Film AT TIFF 2014. Hatcher line produced Bruce McDonalds, *The Husband*, as well as *Picture Day*, starring Tatiana Maslany, which both garnered the Borsos Award for Best Canadian Feature Film in 2013/2014 respectively.

Hatcher is currently producing a web series / TV special titled *The Plateaus*, set to debut on CBC in 2015. He continues to line produce an array of features films from the Canadian auteur directed to service productions from around the globe.

#### Bobby Shore csc (Director of Photography)

Bobby Shore, CSC is a lauded Director of Photography who has worked on award winning feature films, commercials, and music videos. Upon graduating from the cinematography program at the American Film Institute, his talent was in demand - enabling him to shoot in the USA, Canada, and Europe

To date, Shore has shot TV series for IFC, Showcase Network, and most recently FX, with the critically acclaimed series *Man Seeking Woman*, starring Jay Baruchel. Bobby has thirteen feature films to his credit, such as *Fubar 2* and *Goon* (for which he received a Canadian Screen Award nomination for Achievement in Cinematography). Most recently, Bobby shot Karyn Kusama's dark thriller *The Invitation* (which premiered at SXSW 2015) and *Bang Bang Baby*, which premiered at TIFF in 2014 and won Best First Feature at the festival.

Equally interested in music videos and commercials, he has shot for such bands as Austra, Chromeo, Patrick Watson, CFCE, and Majical Cloudz (for which he won the 2014 CSC award for Achievement in Cinematography) and for clients such as Target, Wiser's, L'Oréal, Lise Watier, McDonald's and Toyota.

Bobby splits his time between Los Angeles and Toronto, where he still rides his ten-speed to work.

#### Lisa Soper (Production Designer)

Having begun with creating the illusion of life with pencil and paper in animation, Lisa made the transition into live action film. There, she works with the art department to design and build worlds big and small where real people will interact with an inspiring environment.

From micro to low and moderate budgets, Lisa takes a unique approach to traditional design and creates a one of a kind world drawn from the directors mind and the characters history.

Open a drawer in her environments and see what lies beneath the first layer. She wants to give more than what is on the written page. A comfortable environment that the characters can interact with and get lost in.

Playing safe will not grab the audience. Lisa prides herself on pushing the envelop. All of us have quirks and strange obsessions. From the office worker that cuts small strips of tape and builds it into an Eiffel tower idle, longing to be free from her concrete jungle, to the 1/4 inch covered glass figurines in the empty mother's home that her daughter can't let go of.

Recent credits of Lisa include *Closet Monster*, CBC's *Best Laid Plans*, the feature *The Dark Stranger* and Harlan Coben's series *The Five*.

#### Bryan Atkinson (Editor)

Bryan Atkinson has been a passionate student of film since the age of 14, and an award-winning editor of motion pictures for the last twelve years. After years of travelling and working abroad Bryan settled back in his hometown of Toronto to focus on his career and attend the Editors' Lab at the Canadian Film Centre.

His experience editing feature films, shorts and television includes drama, documentary, animation, trailers and corporate video. The past four years have seen Bryan working with the brightest new talent in Toronto including his most recent collaboration on Stephen Dunn's feature debut, *CLOSET MONSTER* for Rhombus Media.

Bryan edited the feature film *GUIDANCE*, directed by Pat Mills, which premiered at TIFF '14 to enthusiastic critical response, and had four shorts play at Sundance '15, with Dunn's *POP-UP PORNO* series as well as the acclaimed short film *HOLE*. After winning a Jury Prize with its debut at Locarno in 2014, *HOLE* has gone on to play 30 international festivals and win a Canadian Screen Award and the Grand Prize at Clermont-Ferrand 2015.

His work on the short film *NIGHT LIGHT*, earned him a 2013 Canadian Cinema Editor Award for Best Editing in Short Drama. Bryan is currently cutting a web series for the CBC and FirstLove Films. As an ardent supporter of the film community in Toronto, when he's not working you are bound to find him at the cinema.

#### Maya Postepski (Composer)

Maya Postepski never stops. An active member of the Toronto music scene, she has been making music for over 10 years, currently as part of electronic group Austra (Domino). She is a prolific remix artist, DJ and she co-wrote and produced *TRST* with Robert Alfons as Trust (Arts & Crafts).

*Progress* is her latest album, to be released under her solo moniker Princess Century.

This project is the outlet for her genre-crossing experiments that take us on a journey through minimalist cosmic disco psychedelia, crossing through glacial poly-rhythmic territories soaked in dark dripping goo.

Shooting stars and icicles glimmering weave a reflective thread through each track. While mechanical pulses ground soaring delicious keyboards that could melt the heart of a cobra.

Do not be afraid! Close your eyes and allow the warm synthesizer liquid to seep through your veins and take you into a far away galaxy of love, lust and passion.

#### Todor Kobakov (Composer)

Blend the classically infused history of Eastern Europe with the experimental edge of Canadian indie rock and you have before you Todor Kobakov: composer, producer and missionary of genius gadgetry.

Todor has 12 feature film scores to his credit, including *The Samaritan* (2012) - a dark thriller featuring Samuel L. Jackson for which Todor's work was praised by Variety Magazine ("Hollywood composers, take note"). Kobakov also scored *Cold Blooded*, a crime thriller that won the Audience Award at the 2012 Fantasia Film Festival. *The Husband*, (2013) directed by Bruce McDonald received critical acclaim at festivals worldwide and *Hellions*, also directed by Bruce McDonald made it's world premiere at Sundance this year (2015). Currently, you can hear Todor's brooding score to the Space/SyFy TV series *Bitten* which is now in it's second season.

A key player in Toronto's indie music scene, Todor has created transcendent string arrangements for the likes of Metric, Stars, Emily Haines, k-os, Dan Mangan, Lily Frost, Small Sins, Whitehorse and others. His recent collaboration was as orchestrator and conductor on Sarah Bareilles album, *The Blessed Unrest*, nominated for a Grammy this year - 'Album of the Year', running against fellow artists, Daft Punk, Macklemore & Lewis, Kendrick Lamar, & Taylor Swift.

Todor's solo piano album debut, *Pop Music*, was released in 2010 to glowing critical acclaim ("A piano stylist in the gorgeous, whimsical form of Erik Satie" - Globe and Mail). A modern take on classical form, *Pop Music* features collaborations with Emily Haines of Metric and Tunde Adebimpe of TV on the Radio. Todor and collaborator Maya Postepski (of the group Austra) just recently completed the score to, *Closet Monster* (2015), a feature drama directed by Stephen Dunn produced by Rhombus Media.

Todor's musical influences include Debussy, Amon Tobin and The Muppet Show.

#### Melanie Oates (Costume Designer)

Melanie Oates is a Costume Designer, Filmmaker, and Writer from Newfoundland. She got her start in wardrobe on CBC's *Republic of Doyle*, and was Costume Designer for the acclaimed feature film *Cast No Shadow*. She is an award-winning writer and received the 2010 Percy Janes First Novel Award. Mel has written and directed three short films and is currently in production on her web-series *The Manor*. Basically, she'll take anyway into storytelling she can get, whether it's through costumes, fiction, or film.

#### Deirdre Bowen (Casting Director)

Deirdre Bowen has been casting feature films for over 3 decades. She has been fortunate to have worked closely with many of the major players in Canadian film. For Niv Fichman she cast *Enemy*, *Blindness*, *Antiviral*, *Hobo with a Shotgun* and *The Red Violin*. She has virtually cast all of David Cronenberg's films, including most recently *Maps to the Stars*, *Eastern Promises*, *A Dangerous Method*, and *Cosmopolis*. For Don Carmody she worked on *Pompeii*, *Silent Hill* and *Resident Evil Retribution*. Most recently she has been casting feature films for Directors Paul Gross, Radu Mihaleanu and Olivier Assayas.

## Production Companies:

Rhombus Media is an internationally renowned producer of theatrical feature films, TV drama, documentaries and performing arts programmes. Since its inception in 1979, the company has released over 200 productions and has received literally hundreds of awards, including numerous Genies, Geminis, Canadian Screen Awards, Emmys, Golden Pragues and an Oscar. Some of the company's more notable theatrical projects include *The Red Violin*, *Last Night*, *The Saddest Music in the World*, *Clean*, *Snowcake*, *Silk*, *Blindness*, *Passchendaele*, *Hobo With A Shotgun*, *Antiviral*, and *Enemy*. Rhombus' more recent projects include *Into The Forest*, a new film by Patricia Rozema adapted from the book by Jean Hegland and starring Ellen Page, Evan Rachel Wood, Max Minghella and Callum Keith Rennie; *Hyena Road*, an Afghanistan-set war film by Paul Gross; *Zoom*, the debut film from Pedro Morelli, a multi-interface erotic comedy starring Gael García Bernal, Alison Pill and Jason Priestley; and *Closet Monster*, the debut film from Stephen Dunn, a haunting coming-of-age drama starring Connor Jessup and Isabella Rossellini. All four films recently had their world premieres at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival, with *Closet Monster* taking home the prize for Best Canadian Feature Film.

Best Boy Entertainment has produced 9 television series in various genres, including *Mickey's Farm* (The Pet Network), *Skinny Dip* (Travel + Escape), *Soccer Shrines* (Go!TV, The Cave), and *Save My Pet* (Animal Planet, The Pet Network). Their global focus has seen them produce in 15 countries, while selling their programming into 170 countries. Its award-winning sister company, interactive developer Clockwork Fox Studios, recently launched a game-based math learning program called *Zorbit's Math Adventure*, which will be distributed by Scholastic Education. *Closet Monster* is Best Boy's first feature film.

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