

“WASTE” PRESS KIT

Running time: 15 min 50

www.wastefilm.com



SYNOPSIS

Roger lives a grim and detached life, picking up medical waste for a living, but looks forward to his evening conversations with his quirky roommate and foodie, Olive. But as the meals become increasingly strange, and push the limits of curiosity, Roger must ask himself how far he will go for love?



DIRECTOR STATEMENT

After having worked in the horror genre as a producer for more than seven years, I began to feel increasingly de-sensitized in an entertainment environment, which was becoming inundated with violent films and oversaturated by the genre, often seen from the male gaze. It was the proliferation of zombie movies and shows, and reading about real life monster stories on social media and self-cannibalism, that I started to think something existential had changed in our culture. The inner anthropologist in me was both concerned and intrigued, and when I came across Amelia Gray's story *WASTE*, it struck a chord in me that I could not ignore. *WASTE* is a love story, but also an absurdist tale about the dangers of consumption and curiosity.

Olive's character drew me in as the unassuming girl next door, who is quirky and open-minded—but to a fault. I could relate to her fascination with “other” cultures, her desire to push past taboos, and the fine line she straddles between art and artifice, in her never-ending search for “authenticity” and meaning. Olive is a refreshing female character, both the love interest and the villain, and a strong female anti-hero. The power dynamic between her and Roger is an interesting reversal of roles that plays into our fantasies and fears revolving around sexuality and transgressive desires. She pushes Roger past his comfort zone and forces him to question his detached and alienated existence.

Having grown up in a meat eating culture in Poland, a carnivorous diet was standard in society, and implicitly reflected virility, strength and patriarchal attitudes. It wasn't until I read Amelia's story that a memory returned from the first time I went to a slaughterhouse at the young age of 12. The mechanized assembly chains, the electrocution devices that zapped animals to their instantaneous death, and the endless rows of suspended carcasses left a mark in my mind. There was something about the detachment and mechanized relation to the natural world, that I understood as a child was problematic, and that didn't resurface until I moved to Los Angeles.

WASTE is layered with hidden meaning, and hints at the degeneration of western cultural values. Olive's curiosity to me was like modern culture's insatiable obsession with the new, centered around the act of consumption. It touches on the fad of extreme foodie-ism and the culinary quest for the forbidden that has spread across the world, particularly in California. When the indie becomes commodified and usurped by the mainstream, it's increasingly difficult to differentiate between the commercial and organic. Millennials and Gen Y eaters have fetishized the artisanal movement and gentrified old timey-ness and the homemade.

What tickled me most in WASTE above all though, was the absurdist humor and the tone in which it handled its subject matter. Having worked as both an actor and director in physical theater before I moved to film, I sought out material that was complex and thought-provoking but also socially relevant. I am fascinated by the mythologies we are taught to live by, and believe in the power of absurdism to bring levity to metaphysical questions. When there is nothing left to consume, where else can one turn to, but oneself?





CAST BIOS

LUKE BAINES - ROGER

Luke was born in Manchester England, the youngest of four children. At the age of three, he emigrated to Sydney, Australia where he grew up in the beachside suburb of Cronulla.

Classically trained, Luke studied drama and music at The McDonald College of Performing Arts - a selective full-time institution in Sydney. After graduating, he fast-tracked his Bachelor of Business in two years at Bond University, before moving to London where he was discovered by legendary West End casting director, Pippa Ailion, during preproduction of *Spring Awakening the Musical* - which he auditioned and workshopped with Broadway creatives Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater.

Soon after, Luke set his sights on Los Angeles, moving to the States in 2011. His first US feature was in Gold Circle Films' *The Possession of Michael King* as Elias, an expert in the occult. His next role would come in Disney's *Saving Mr. Banks* playing a barman in 1906 Australia.

Next, Luke played Ricky Gladstone in Richard Zelniker's *As Night Comes*, which follows the sociopathic teenager's antics on the night before Halloween. In *The Ever After* with Melissa Leo and Teresa Palmer, he played a photography assistant to protagonist Thomas - played by Mark Webber.

In 2015, Luke secured his most notable role to date in *The Girl in The Photographs*, a project produced by Wes Craven and written and directed by Nick Simon. Premiering at The Toronto International Film Festival, his performance as the sociopathic serial killer garnered him rave reviews from the likes of *The Wrap*, *The Line Up* and *Press Pass LA*.

His forthcoming projects include indie horror, *Fright Fest*, opposite Dylan Walsh, and David Fincher's HBO show, *Video Synchronicity*.

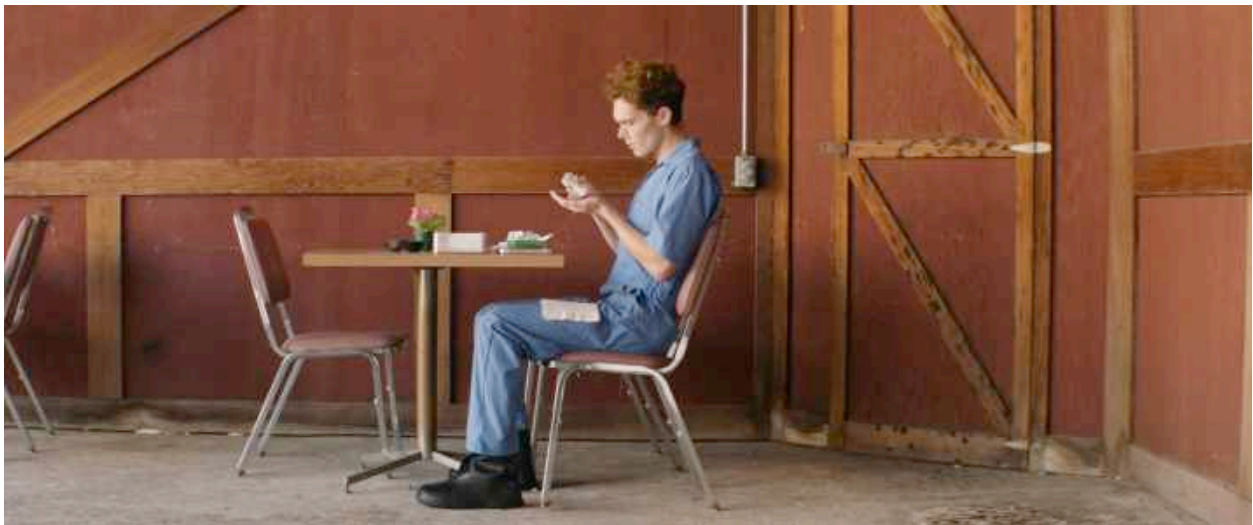
In addition to acting, Luke has also found success in modeling, appearing in campaigns for American Eagle, American Rag, Roark Collective and Chapter. Editorially, he has appeared in Dazed + Confused, BITE and Photogenics Magazine.

Off camera, Luke has a branded content production company, Go Forth Content, with partners Rachael Taylor and Tahyna Tozzi. A skilled writer, he is currently working on his fourth feature script and has his latest work, In Repair, in pre-production at Culmination Productions.

Philanthropically, Luke is an ardent supporter of Oxfam International. He also works locally in Los Angeles with the VET Hunters Project – connecting homeless veterans with government programs, and BCR Burbank – a center for adults and children with developmental disabilities.

SARAH BARTHOLOMEW - OLIVE

Sarah Bartholomew was born and raised in the beach cities of Southern California. She spent the majority of her childhood training and dancing in a touring dance company, as well as performing in musicals. When she was eighteen, Sarah moved to London, England to study Dance and Theatre both at Kingston University and at The Urdang Academy. She graduated from The Urdang Academy in 2014 with a BA Honors in Dance and Musical Theatre. She then moved back home to Los Angeles where she has been working in film, stage, and TV. Sarah also dances and choreographs for dance companies and is the lead singer of a rock alternative music group, A Mind Made Me.



CREW BIOS

JUSTINE RACZKIEWICZ - WRITER / DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

Justine's career in the film industry began at The Weinstein Company where she represented the company's various media labels as well as worked on publicity campaigns for Todd Hayne's I'M NOT THERE and Woody Allen's VICKY CRISTINA BARCELONA. Shortly after, she moved to physical production where she worked on a number of award-winning films including Rob Marshall's NINE, Stephen Daldry's THE READER, John Hillcoat's THE ROAD and Quentin Tarantino's INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS.

Under the Dimension Films label, Justine worked as an Associate Producer on PIRANHA 3D, alongside director Alexandre Aja. Since then, she has developed and associate produced a wide range of projects with Aja for his company, "Fire-Axe Pictures". MANIAC, the daring point-of-view thriller starring Elijah Wood, played in the Official Selection at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival and was released by IFC Films. HORNS generated a lot of hype at Fantastic Fest in Austin and at the 2013 Toronto Film Festival, where it played in the Official Vanguard Selection. HORNS an edgy supernatural thriller with a darkly comedic twist is based on the bestselling novel by Joe Hill. Aja directed this refreshing rock 'n' roll take on the devil myth, starring Daniel Radcliffe. It was released by Radius in October 2014.

Along with Aja, Justine also worked with FOX International on two different films. She executive produced, THE PYRAMID, an adventure horror film set in an ancient Egyptian pyramid, directed by Gregory Levasseur and released by FOX International in December 2014; THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR, a haunted house possession thriller set in India, directed by Johannes Roberts, was released in March 2016.

Most recently, Justine worked as an Associate Producer on, THE 9th LIFE OF LOUIS DRAX, a poignant family drama and a Hitchcockian thriller based on the book of the same name, which Miramax produced and Alex Aja directed. The film stars Jamie Dornan, Aaron Paul and Sarah Gadon, and was shot on location in Vancouver.

Other projects on the development slate with Alex Aja include: SCANNERS, a re-imagining of the cult original as a new espionage thriller TV show with Dimension Films; UNMANNED, a TV show centered around a drone operator living in Las Vegas, and COBRA: THE SPACE PIRATE, a sci-fi based on the cult manga and one of the most successful franchises in Japan.

In 2015, Justine started her own production company, "Building J" under which she is producing and developing a series of short and feature films, including "DICHTERLIEBE: POETLOVE" a modern musical adaptation of the 19th century German composer, Robert Schumann's art-song cycle set in New York; as well as her directorial debut, "WASTE" adapted from a short story by Amelia Gray.

Originally from Warsaw, Poland Justine's passion for storytelling has taken her from stage to script and across the globe. She graduated magna cum laude from Barnard College, Columbia

University and studied Theater, Philosophy and Anthropology. She has also trained at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, Ecole de Theatre Jacques LeCoq in Paris and the Parsons School of Design.

AMELIA GRAY - WRITER

AMELIA GRAY is the author of four books: AM/PM, Museum of the Weird, THREATS, and Gutshot. Her fiction and essays have appeared in The New Yorker, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Tin House, and VICE. She is winner of the NYPL Young Lion, of FC2's Ronald Sukenick Innovative Fiction Prize, and a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction. She lives in Los Angeles.

<http://ameliagrays.com/>

DOMENICA CASTRO - PRODUCER

Domenica Castro, a native of Mexico City, now permanently resides in Los Angeles. She studied film at UNLV, where she focused on both narrative and commercial work. Her first web series, Nightwing, went on to win multiple awards including Best Youtube Fan Film at UASE, and she recently produced her first feature, The Track, starring Sam Trammell and Missy Yager, which debuted at the Dances With Films Festival.

While primarily focused on film and television, Domenica continues to work on music videos and alternative media, in addition to serving as an advisor for the Las Vegas Film Festival and the head of production at HCI Advertising, where she won the Telly Award. She has a strong interest in continuing to develop and grow the Hispanic market both within Mexico and the United States.

CONSTANZA CASTRO – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Constanza Castro is a filmmaker born in Mexico City. She graduated from the UNLV with a bachelor's degree in Film and is now a Master graduate in film Producing from The American Film Institute Conservatory in Los Angeles.

In undergrad she was honored to be the first Latin UNLV film student to produce a feature-length film during school as well as be the first recipient of the \$25k Johnny Brenden Filmmaker's Award. At AFI, she was awarded the AFI scholarship in her first year and received the Jeffrey Katzenberg Fellowship Award, a full year scholarship.

Constanza has produced numerous award-winning shorts, music videos as well as an independent feature film LIARS FIRES AND BEARS which premiered at the Chinese Theaters in Hollywood, Austin Film Festival, San Diego Film Festival, among others. Her work has been seen on MTV.com, Vice and Billboard. THE ORWELLS "Blood Bubbles" music video and her shorts HALA and FLEX have been Vimeo Staff Picks.

Recent works including, ZELOS and IN PURSUIT premiered at Palm Springs International Shortsfest. Her shorts have screened at Nordisk Panorama, RIFF, LA Shorts, Napa, LVFF, Atlanta Film Fest, Sarasota, Dances With Films, to name a few.

She assisted Karen Moncrieff on her Blumhouse Film THE KEEPING HOURS, and is now producing Moncrieff's next feature. She's currently producing commercials and developing two features and a 2 pilots.

MARTIM VIAN – CINEMATOGRAPHER

Martim grew up in Lisbon, Portugal, where he studied Cinematography at the National Film School Conservatory. He continued his education at FAMU (the Czech National Film School) where he attended the International Film program, and after being awarded a Full Scholarship in Fine Arts he moved to Los Angeles where he completed a Masters in Cinematography at the AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE. During this program he was awarded both the TOM YODA and the BRIDGES/LARSON scholarships in recognition of talent and academic achievement. His thesis film EQUESTRIAN SEXUAL RESPONSE was selected for several festival and was nominated for a Student Academy Award. Martim was also selected to participate in the 2006 BERLINALE TALENT CAMPUS, that takes place during the Berlin Film Festival.

His credits include several national and international broadcast commercials for clients like AXE, PURINA, SKITTLES, DISNEY, SONY, ENERGIZER or LEVIS, and music-videos for bands such as HAIM, MS MR, BASTILLE, JEREMIH, WEIRD AL to name a few.

<http://www.martimvian.com>

ROBERT BRECKO – PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Robert Brečko-Acklen, a Slovenien born and raised in Germany, formerly based in Berlin - is a Production Design graduate from the American Film Institute and graduate from the University of Applied Sciences Dortmund Germany, with a degree in Visual Communication, Photography, and Film Design.

Since graduating from AFI, Robert has been responsible for the production design of several award winning short films.

Robert has worked for many years with international brands and a representable client list as a freelance designer in the field of set design, art direction, and photography.

<http://www.robertbrecko.de>

ALEXIS JOHNSON – COSTUME DESIGNER

<http://www.alexis-johnson.com>

OLIVER HARWOOD - EDITOR

Oliver Harwood is an LA-Based editor and filmmaker. Originally from the small English town of Northampton, he first fell in love with the practice of editing after stealing his father's video camera as a teenager.

Since then, he has worked on films that have screened and won awards at numerous festivals including Miami, Palm Beach, Las Vegas, Los Angeles New Wave, Rhode Island, and Tribeca. His recent projects include MAE & ASH, which was a Vimeo Staff Pick and the recipient of three NO BUDGE awards; and CONTRAPELO, which premiered at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival and went on to win the Best Independent Short Film Award at the Cine Gear Expo of the same year.

He received his MFA in film editing from the American Film Institute in 2013.

MICHAEL O'FARRELL – SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR

Michael O'Farrell has been working in sound for over 30 years as David Cronenberg's longtime collaborator on films including "Maps to the Stars", "Cosmopolis", "Eastern Promises" and "A History of Violence". Most recently he worked with Justine Raczkiewicz on the "The 9th Life of Louis Drax" and "Horns".

LUCAS LECHOWSKI - COMPOSER

Lucas Lechowski is a Polish born composer, violinist and guitarist. Lucas started his career as a classical violinist, performing with various ensembles and touring Europe with orchestras (such as The Yehudi Menuhin's International Youth Orchestra Academy in Bayreuth). In his professional life his passion and curiosity for music led him to explore many genres of music. He has been performing and recording music with classical, jazz, folk and rock groups. He graduated from the University of Music in Katowice, Poland, receiving: B.A. in Violin Performance, M.A. in Jazz Violin Performance, and M.A. in Jazz Guitar Performance.

Lucas has also originated numerous projects showcased at music festivals, film festivals and art galleries. His experimental projects involve technology combined with improvised music and image. The debut multimedia project Hello was critically acclaimed in Poland; Sketches from Virtual Space, project that explores music and architecture of cyberspace was recently published in art, science and new media magazine CyberEmpathy.

He also creates experimental pieces of music: The Outer Space (for 12 violins was released on a classical album Millennial Masters II, a compilation of works from the most promising up and coming classical composers published by Ablaze Records); Unity, explores violin and piano harmonics and semitones, and Wrinkles is an experimental juxtaposition of digital sound processing ('wrinkling') and acoustic violin sound. Lechowski also wrote Traffic and Minimal for the contemporary wing of the Baltimore Museum of Arts.

Among other projects, Lucas scored NBC's Tom Brokaw Special: Where Were You: The Day JFK Died commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of President Kennedy aired in NBC on the day of anniversary. One of the short films he scored Un mundo para Raul won the Student Academy Award® (Student Oscars) in 2013 and another short film Lucas worked on in 2013 - Perfidia by David Figueroa, was a semifinalist of 2014 Student Academy Award® and a winner of the Directors Guild of America Student Film Award.

Lucas was honored to be among selectees of several of most prestigious film music fellowships and workshops. In 2014 he became a Berlinale Talent and ASCAP/Film Independent Project Involve fellow; in 2013 he became a Sundance Institute Fellow after being chosen to participate in the Sundance Institute Composers Lab (Feature Film) at the Skywalker Ranch. In 2012 he was selected for the ASCAP/Columbia University Film Scoring Workshop and also in 2012 he was selected for the NYU/ASCAP Television & Film Scoring Workshop. In January 2013 Lucas was chosen to participate in The Society of Composers and Lyricists' Mentorship Program and relocated to Los Angeles where he currently resides.

<http://www.lucaslechowski.com>