



A FILM BY SOPHIA SAVAGE

EMPTYREAN

MOVING WATER PRODUCTIONS Presents A FILM BY SOPHIA SAVAGE / SOPHIA SAVAGE SONNY KING TYLER DAWSON SUZANNE FORD JIMMY HEAZLEWOOD LINDSAY LUCAS-BARTLETT / DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY CHAYSE IRVIN / EDITED BY SOPHIA SAVAGE RANDY ROSS RYAN COSTA / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CAROL SAVAGE ROSE / ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS MIKE ALTMANN KEITH BALTER LINDSEY LUCAS-BARTLETT KYLE HELLER JANET LANCASTER TIM NARDELLI MIKE NARDELLI CASEY O'MEARA WILLIAM E. SAVAGE / PRODUCED BY SOPHIA SAVAGE RANDY ROSS / WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY SOPHIA SAVAGE

BASED ON A TRUE STORY / EMPTYREANFILM.COM

PRESS KIT

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I was a little girl I told people my dad was a superhero, and it wasn't a lie. In my mind, superhero meant someone who tries to save the world, and that's what my dad did. He was Jack, The Environmentalist. He was born in a taxicab in New York City in 1947. He had one love and five children with her. He taught me how to be stubborn, to be an idealist and to appreciate old movies.

The first sign that my father had brain cancer came on January 27, 2010. Exactly three months later he was gone. There was no logic in asking why. His mind mutated. We watched him disappear.

When I began putting the experience into a script, it was simply my best attempt at understanding what had happened within those three months. Given the wound was still fresh, out of reach for sense-making, the process became simply a documentation of memories waiting to be processed.

Death is very simple; our understanding and fear of it are not. It makes us want to hold on, when what it asks of us is to let go. This dichotomy propelled the script as it evolved, and infused the filmmaking process as my story found a new life in EMPYREAN.

EMPYREAN is not a declaration, but rather an exploration of the space between life and death where our human instincts tell us to resist, to fight, to survive. The space in which no one knows what to do or say.

I keep coming back to this explanation of zero gravity. It is the best articulation I've found so far of what being in that space feels like.

"It is more like motionlessness than movement...as long as you are in rational control of your movements, zero gravity is the realization of a dream. A little push sends you gliding, just like the characters in science fiction stories. Beware losing your orientation, however. If your instincts take over, your brain starts telling you, 'You're falling, reach out and catch yourself.' Your arms and legs flail until you regain rational control and convince your brain you are okay." *

EMPYREAN is my articulation of how I entered 'zero gravity' and lost my orientation in order to let go of my father – a painful but ultimately necessary realization of a nightmare so that he – and I – could be set free.

**As explained by Fred Best, director of the NASA Center for Space Power at Texas A&M University, in Scientific American, 1999.*

- Sophia Savage



SYNOPSIS

Death makes us want to hold on. EMPYREAN is about finding the grace in letting go.

Sadie's father, Jim, is dying of brain cancer. It's only been two months since the diagnosis but he's already lost his sense of reality – his mind and memory are slipping away even faster than his body. It's Sadie's turn to help her mother care for Jim as he runs out the time on the days or weeks that he has left, but the beautiful, rugged landscape that they call home has become a threat as his behavior grows more erratic.

Sadie tries to maintain her strength, but the approach quickly deteriorates throughout restless nights and hazy days as she realizes the peace she hoped to make with her father now seems out of reach — it's too late for goodbyes and apologies – there's just the here and now, and the comfort to be found in seeing her father as a man who needs to be released from this world as gently as possible, even if it breaks her heart.





AWARDS & SCREENINGS

Official selection

RED ROCK FILM FESTIVAL, Zion Canyon UT | NOV 1-9, 2013

Winner: NH Short Film of the Year,

NEW HAMPSHIRE FILM FESTIVAL, Portsmouth NH | OCT 17-21 2013

Official selection,

HOLLYSHORTS FILM FESTIVAL, Hollywood CA AUG 15-22 2013

Winner: World Cinema Best Directing Award

AMSTERDAM FILM FESTIVAL | MAY 2013

Work in progress screening

POWFEST, Portland OR | MAR 6-9 2013

PRODUCTION

Cast

Sophia Savage

Sonny King

Tyler Dawson

Suzanne Ford

Jimmy Heazlewood

Lindsay Lucas-Bartlett

Written, Directed & Produced by: Sophia Savage

Director of Cinematography: Chayse Irvin

Produced by: Randy Ross

www.empyreanfilm.com

www.savagesophia.com



BIOS

Sophia Savage – Writer & Director (“Sadie”) @thesavagesophia

Home-schooled by hippies in New Hampshire until the age of 13, Sophia was immersed in a uniquely creative environment that allowed her to develop herself as a writer, dancer, actor and artist from a very early age. She has starred in several stage productions and had both her writing and artwork published. Upon graduating from Smith College with top honors (where she double majored in Film and Theater) she received the institution's yearly playwriting award for a script that was subsequently produced. She continued to star in stage productions while living abroad in New Zealand (including Christopher Hampton's "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," William Shakespeare's "Titus Andronicus" and the world premiere of "The Serena Syndrome").

Sophia landed in Los Angeles in 2009 where she spent over three years as a staff writer for notable online film industry publications Thompson on Hollywood! and IndieWire while writing her own projects and training at various acting schools. EMPYREAN marks her directorial debut. She is now developing her first feature.

Chayse Irvin – Director of Photography @chayseirvin

Born and raised in Vancouver, Canada, Chayse has had a passion for film production and storytelling since he was eight years old, when he was making short films with friends and family members. Chayse's began his career at 16 as an Art Department assistant; four years later he transitioned into cinematography. At film school, Chayse discovered his obsession for cinematography studying with cinematographer Attila Szalay, HSC, CSC, and producer and production designer David Willson.

Chayse's first feature film, "Son of the Sunshine," received critical acclaim for his emotional photography; it had a very successful festival run, winning numerous awards across North America.

He has garnered respect from many of his colleagues, including David Mullen, ASC, David Moxness, CSC. A dual citizen currently residing in Los Angeles, Chayse has quickly become one of North America's brightest emerging cinematography talents, bringing a new eye to cinematography and its contribution to cinema.

Sonny King ("Jim")

Sonny Alfred King is from Washington, D.C. His early introduction to 'showbusiness' was performing comedy, drama and music sketches his mother wrote while the leader of his Cubscout Troop. Sonny continued to perform on stage throughout his youth and at the University of Maryland. After a tour in Vietnam, Sonny married the girl of his dreams. They've been married 39 years, have two daughters, a son and four grandchildren. They moved to the Los Angeles area in 1982, where Sonny has worked as an actor, musician and electrician. Sonny's credits include many studio and independent films, including Cameron Crowe's "Elizabethtown," Warner Bros.' "Eraser" and "Murder in the First," as well as TV shows "Reno 911" and "The Magnificent Seven."

Suzanne Ford ("Jane")

Suzanne trained in NYC with Stella Adler and William Esper, and has appeared in over 100 theatre productions there, on tour, and regionally, including recently at The Laguna Playhouse, La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, Rogue Machine and Pacific Resident Theatre.

She has guest-starred on dozens of TV shows (incl. "House," "Bones," "How I Met Your Mother," "Monk," "Friends"), has many supporting credits in studio films (incl. "The Informers," "Fatal Attraction" and the upcoming "The Apparition") and recently shot leading roles in the indie films "MoniKa," "God's Country," "Darkening Sky" with Rider Strong, "Uncross the Stars" with Barbara Hershey and Ron Perlman, and "Of Silence" with writer/director/star Jeremiah Sayys.

Tyler Dawson ("Tucker")

Born in Vancouver, Canada, Tyler began doing theater at a young age and transitioned into film and television as a teenager. In 2000, he moved to Los Angeles to attend the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. Most recently, Tyler appeared as Aiden in the critically acclaimed indie film "Bellflower." He has appeared in several short films, was a regular on the cult web series "Boss of The Glory" and served as host for the company STIM TV. He likes cats, bazookas and a warm glass of milk before bed.

Jimmy Heazlewood ("Sam")

Before moving to Los Angeles to study at The Stella Adler Academy, Jimmy studied acting at the South Seas Film & Television School in his native New Zealand, where his entire family is immersed in the entertainment business in one way or another. A true Kiwi, Jimmy is adventurous and a nature lover. He is excited to be working on this project as he establishes himself in the industry.