

Longing

Short film directed by Christian Mushenko

[IMDb PAGE » http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6992618/?ref_=ttmi_tt](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6992618/?ref_=ttmi_tt)

Vimeo Trailer link: <https://vimeo.com/219201585>

Director Statement

“LONGING” is the directorial debut for Christian Mushenko. Better known as a photographer, this short film brings the theme of a personal project called “connections” to the screen, allowing a new depth to the exploration of the topic.

The film is a story of longing, regret, redemption, hope, and ultimately connection. We see a wealthy disconnected businessman who has everything, searching for meaning in his life; while a woman who has nothing manages to give that hope to others. The film’s story line is told via a letter from a father to his son, discovered after the father’s death. The father voices his regrets for his own life, and his hopes for his son’s.

“For many years I’ve been interested in human dynamics, in what we do to each other, what we are capable of giving/being to another. Photo essays on nuns ministering to lepers in Mexico; everyday heroes in New York; families and carers of terminally ill children have all been about exploring our humanity seen through how we connect with something outside ourselves. This film is the first time I’ve done this through a fictional story”, says Christian.

Christian believes the theme of connection; the light that connection provides in our lives, is universal. In some ways the story takes on the feel of a modern fable. We stumble in the dark chasing after what we think will protect us and our families, make us happy; only to find in many cases we have excluded and ignored what is most important.

A tale of light lost and found. A modern fable with a story all too present in our time.

Resumes



Christian Mushenko
SUBMISSION CONTACT, DIRECTOR

Building on a career as a photographer, Christian is enjoying expanding his storytelling via motion. His move into film at this time incorporates his love of capturing the feeling of the moment, and aligns with his desire to explore our humanity as seen through how we connect with something outside ourselves.

Over a long career he has shot for many of the largest brands, working in Australia, Asia, Europe, and the USA and has been recognized by international awards in advertising as well as photography. He has exhibited in Europe, Australia and the USA. He still gets a tad excited if the light is just right, or about capturing that moment of real connection. Currently he is based in New York, splitting his time between commissions in Australia, Asia and the US.



Drew Moore
PRODUCER

Drew Moore is a Producer and Literary Manager working out of the New York market. This is the second School of Visual Arts Masters Thesis film he has produced in four years, the first of which INFERNO (by Alcee Walker) received the DGA Jury Award for Best Student Film in the North East division.

As a literary manager, Drew managed Actium Pictures, who Co-Produced the independent feature film LET ME MAKE YOU A MARTYR (By Corey Asraf and John Swab) in Oklahoma starring Mark Boon JR and Marilyn Manson among others in 2014. In 2015, Drew Moore managed Sunshine Tears, LLC which produced 60 minutes of content for their web series LOFTY DREAMS (by Ian Campbell) in the form of five 12-minute episodes.

Drew Moore is managing client Luke Cartwright in his Graphic Novel adaptation entitled OBSCURA: THE ILLUSTRATED CRIME CHRONICLE with publishing through Caliber Comics with a projected 2017 release among other projects.

Drew Moore
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Marque Kabbaz

WRITER

Marque grew up in the leafy inner city suburbs of Australia, where from a very early age his father would teach him how to work with his hands, carving wood, fixing things, making, building, crafting. All the while he'd hear stories of his grandfather, the shipbuilder on the Amazon. Unfortunately his grandfather died before Marque was born, but his stories lived on.

The power of storytelling was burned into him from this young age, and as soon as his schooling had finished he embarked on a quest to understand people and stories in more intricate detail. A Bachelor's Degree in Behavioural Psychology gave him a greater understanding of what motivates us, drives and engages us.

Over the next few years he travelled extensively throughout Asia, collecting stories and experiences along the way - and writing them all in a journal which would become his first collection of stories. Arriving back in Australia he jumped into the film industry, doing Post-Production and VFX for Hollywood features with the effects company RSP in Adelaide.

But soon, the shine wore off production and he wanted to tell more stories. Using his wits and grit, he started as a copywriter in an advertising agency, progressing quickly to become creative group head of Leo Burnett in Sydney. Here he spent his days writing stories for brands and making commercials and films.

But it was a trip to NYC in 2014 that changed his path again. The city affected him so strongly, he was compelled to write about it. The only rules he gave himself were, write from the heart, one session, no edits, then post it online and set it free. The stories were well received and since then, he's been indulging his love of pure storytelling on a regular basis.

Production Notes

not a film about race!

A film about connections obviously needs to show human connections. Our story has two main characters, with the main plot told through a voice over from the father. This leaves limited scope for interactions, especially as the two main characters only meet at the end of the film.

This then required a lot of montages with extras. At the time of shooting, the only extras that came forward were all African-American. This ended up with us filming a film that looked like a story a rich white dude against a colored New York. Not the film I intended filming! Editing and B roll footage saved the day!

"can I get your autograph?"

In one scene shot on Wall Street, we stopped the crowds of asian tourists to get our shot of our man walking past the famous bull. A few grumbled at our Drew Moore, our producer's loud voice clearing the space for us to shoot (quickly), while others afterwards rushed up to Daniel J O'Brien to ask for his autograph.

crazy Sicilian hair

We cast Angela Carbone as the female lead as she brought an amazing sensitivity to the role, oh and she looked like she could be the daughter of a latino maid with her 'wild Sicilian hair'! On a fitting day just before filming she had bright red hair from her previous production. A quick dye rescued the curls and innocence of our lead.

"We'll slate at the end!"

We were lucky enough to secure the talented Alison Mao as editor. In her contract she stipulated the delivery specs for the production, including this as the third from the top: "Film a smart Slate for EACH take without stopping Camera Clip or Production Audio." Campbell Brown was our brilliant Director of Photography, and like all the best creative geniuses, immersed himself in the moments. He became famous for saying "We'll tail slate this one!" You can guess how many we did.

creating the library

Daniel's character came from a wealthy family and several scenes played in his family library. Think bookcases of leather bound books, grand desk, leather high backed chair, etc. Being a student film the budget didn't stretch to \$10,000 asked by location sites. We asked Bauman Rare Books on Madison Avenue if we could shoot in there beautiful space, but that wasn't going to fly either. So Lora Gettelfinger our talented production designer rescued the day converting a library in our Associate Producer Nicholas Holmes's apartment to have the grandeur required.

'that' photograph

A family photograph of our leads as children featured in the film, so I asked them all to send me childhood pics. In going through them, there was a pic of Angela and her sister that worked, and we felt so certain by the eyes which was Angela, we didn't even bother to check. Apparently her sister found it very amusing we used her picture instead of Angela's.

finding the quote

The James Joyce book Ulysses features in the film, and in particular a quote from the book:

"Hold to the now, the here, through which all future plunges to the past." On the first morning of filming we were to shoot the scenes with the book, and I realized we hadn't found the quote and marked the page yet. A quick message to the writer in Sydney confirmed the section of the book, which gave us a rough guide it was somewhere in the middle of a nearly 800 page book. Caroline Berthonneau (Script Supervisor) and Angela Mushenko (Assistant to Director and Producer) got to work and found the quote in time.