

written and directed by
Honey Lauren

Mistake



Festival Press Kit

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Mistake

An unexpected and deeply human intersex story

LOG LINE

1941, somewhere in the American South, a child is born between the sexes. The parents must choose, boy or girl. Thirty years later, with hormone treatment, Larry is raised a man. The Deep South is anything but an understanding environment in which to realize that a mistake has been made.

SYNOPSIS

In 1941, somewhere in the American South, a baby is born between the sexes, and the family must make an agonizing choice, boy or girl? The doctors call it Adrenogenital Syndrome—intersex, sexually ambiguous. His mother calls it “devil’s work.”

Set in 1971, assigned by his father to live as male, Larry Benson is the son of a tobacco farmer. Since the age of twelve, testosterone shots every ten days have left Larry powerful, small, and quick to anger—always ready to throw the first punch. And truly uncomfortable in his own skin. Now thirty, Larry works on his family’s tobacco farm. He keeps to himself, his rough exterior guarding a deep self-loathing—with one exception: Lily, his childhood best friend, who he is reunited with. Lily, different herself, is open-hearted and unguarded, Lily accepts Larry as he is. Her romantic love offers him a glimpse of peace and the possibility of belonging he’s never known.

Lily provides unconditional support and a shared understanding of what it feels like to be an outsider, and the free-spirited and fashionable Aug Peg, visiting from California, embraces Larry’s difference with warmth and acceptance.

When a local man insults Lily at a dance, Larry explodes in violence. He finds himself in jail—and suddenly cut off from the hormones that have defined his existence. Larry is forced to confront who he truly is beneath years of shame and denial, and he begins to question the uncompromising bigotry of his small-town rural life.

As Larry’s body changes and he starts to examine and accept new ways of looking at himself, his father viciously rejects both Larry and his love for Lily.

One night, a brutal confrontation between Larry and his father leads to a tragic and violent end.

MISTAKE is an unflinching, deeply human portrait of alienation, identity and love.

FILMMAKER

Q&A

HONEY LAUREN

Writer | Director | Actress

How did you come up with your idea for the film? What did you draw your own personal experience in making this film?

I can't tell you where the story idea for *Mistake* came from. I'm an intuitive storyteller / writer and never know how ideas come to me but stories often come to me, formed. I see images, the dialogue is literally dictated to me. I know that sounds crazy. Everyone has their process, this is mine. And I often have a hard time analyzing my stories... that's like editing myself. It's not what I do. I can however tell you where the seed of an idea comes from... In the case of this film, *MISTAKE*, I set out to write about a particularly powerful time in my young life. From the time I was born till about the age of eight, I never understood why my parents named me 'Honey'. It was a girls' name. And I knew I wasn't a girl. I would complain to my parents, yet they were remarkably undisturbed about their error. And so, by the time I was seven, I had cut off my hair, I only wore boy's clothes (SEARS, slim cut jeans, my brother wore Huskies), and I changed my name to Lawrence. I call that, "the year I was a boy". My parents were cool about it. If they had any anxiety or concern, they never showed it. They must have spoken to the school I attended, because the school was cool also. They all let me live as Lawrence.

And this was a long, long, long time ago.

Living as a boy was not easy. If I felt a sense of freedom, I don't exactly remember. I "passed" as Lawrence most of the time. The rest of the time, the world let me know I was anything but free to live as a boy. Summer at the YMCA was brutal. Boy fights are brutal.

At the end of that summer, after yet another boy-fight, I told my parents I was done. They were cool calling me Lawrence, but the rest of the world was not. I was eight and I was tired. I let my hair grow out and the very day I had my ears pierced my parents took me to El Coyote restaurant, long before it became a well-known queer establishment in Hollywood. I remember that day, the waiter saying to me, "and what would the young man like?" I was still a boy even when I was trying to be a girl.

As I look back, all these years later, Lawrence is still a part of me. I set out to write about it, and that is how *MISTAKE*, came into being. When I first started down this road to get *MISTAKE* produced, (over a decade ago), it was reported that 1 in 5000 people were born Intersex. Three years ago, the numbers changed to one 1 in 3500.

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Filmmaker Q&A

About three months before we started shooting, I saw that the numbers changed again, now 1 in 1500, (That would make intersex as common as red hair, maybe more common than identical twins!). Now, I myself was born with differences. But it wasn't till I learned that under this expanded definition that would include "a difference in sex linked traits or anatomy", that my differences fall under this definition of "what is intersex"... again, I learned this, three months before we started shooting... We are indeed attracted to what we are.

What are your influences for this film and for your body of work overall?

Some of the director's that have influenced me are Terrence Mallick, Jaco Van Dormeal, Andrei Tarkovsky, Abel Ferrara, and Gasper Noé. Images from their films stay with me still. I can watch their films, literally with the sound off and feel their universe.

MISTAKE takes place "Somewhere in the American South". I wanted to create the world. In the American South, a "holler" is a colloquial term used primarily in the Appalachian region to refer to a small, secluded valley or "hollow" between hills or mountains. It is a geographical term that has evolved into a key part of the local cultural identity. I wanted to step into this "holler", that was a world unto itself, speaking their own language out of the King James Bible. It was rural and suffocating, all at the same time. Several of the characters even looked alike, as they were all from the "same tribe", (and an abundance of redheads). American photographer William Eggleston was a huge inspiration to me for the production design. I'm clearly obsessed not only

with period pieces, but a particular time in American history. (My short WIVES OF THE SKIES, took place in 1965). I was diligent in my pursuit of the vintage costuming down to the undergarments and Lily's flip flops. These details are beyond important to me to. They are necessary for me to tell the story.

Writing MISTAKE and all my writing, is an inexplicable process for me. What I can tell you, is I hear the characters speak to me. And often they won't leave me alone till I write their scenes. I hear them on my walks or I wake up out of a sleep and they're talking. I wrote the feature script for MISTAKE eleven years ago. During lockdown, I decided then to write the novel. I wrote the book in seven different voices and when I look upon that influence, William Faulkner comes to mind, his As I LAY DYING.

You have an acclaimed history as a veteran film actress. How did your acting experience inform directing your lead actors?

In my storytelling, verisimilitude is key in all aspects. This is how I approached my directing with these wonderful actors. This story, these people, had to be real. In every scene, I wanted the actors to essentially be fighting for their lives.

It was my hope to find actors who really felt like we plucked them out of this holler. I could go on for days about casting this film. Actress Jiji Hise, who plays Lily, was a combination of amazing actress and type casting. For Lily, I asked the actresses to try a version of the audition in a high, pitched voice. (That's how I heard her). Lily had no voice. In 1971, somewhere in the American south, her voice would not be heard.

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Filmmaker Q&A

It was stuck in her chest from maybe age nine. As the movie goes on, we see this 'slow girl', is truly the wisest of them all, we hear her voice deepen as the power of love, her love for Larry, his for her, transforms her. I knew the first time I met lead actor Dominic Bogart, as with Jiji, that he was LARRY. I watched many of his demo tapes and I saw this "rabid dog". When auditioning, Dominic carried a tension that was testosterone fueled, and yet I saw glimpses of vulnerability that I knew were necessary to fully embody the character of Larry.

You've chosen to set the film in the American deep South of the 1940's and 1970's. Why this era and place, and how is this story unique for its time and also timeless and relevant today?

Honestly, it's absolutely how I saw and heard the film. It's set in the early 70's so there wouldn't be any distractions. No google, no cell phones, no "Meet up" groups... Larry is alone in this. The lack of sophistication in his testosterone dosage, was present then. They simply didn't know as much as they know now. (Though if this happened to Larry now, there's still no guarantees his testosterone would have been lowered.

This film is about being different. Not just Larry, but Lily too. This film is about identity, alienation and love... These are universal themes we can all relate to.

And while the world has come a long way since 1971, some things are sadly the same.

The gender issues are current. They are relevant. If we can examine, learn, and heal from intolerant attitudes of our past, we can move towards a

more equitable society where not only intersex people but people of all gender varieties can live free and happy. And really anyone who is forced, or chooses to live outside strict social norms.

In Larry and Lily, you've created two complex, rarely seen lead characters, with compassion and empathy. How does that central relationship propel the dramatic arc of the film?

MISTAKE is a Romeo and Juliet story between Lily and Larry, and it was important that the audience fall in love with these wonderful characters as much as I did. I worked to have a compassionate view for everyone. What I can tell you is, I feel Larry and Lily in my soul as I do all the characters. I have to. I don't know how to write any other way.

It's important to remember this film is really a melodrama. My favorite kind of film. We rarely see films like this anymore. People are so stoic now, and I want to see what's behind that.

I believe the emotional weight of the story can change the way people think about outsiders.

My hope is that if even one person can leave this film with a more compassionate view, and less fear towards people who are different, then I did my job.

What are you working on next?

I have a gender/ bender, lesbian western I co-wrote and will be directing in 2026. I'll be using much of the same team I did with MISTAKE. Everyone did an incredible job.

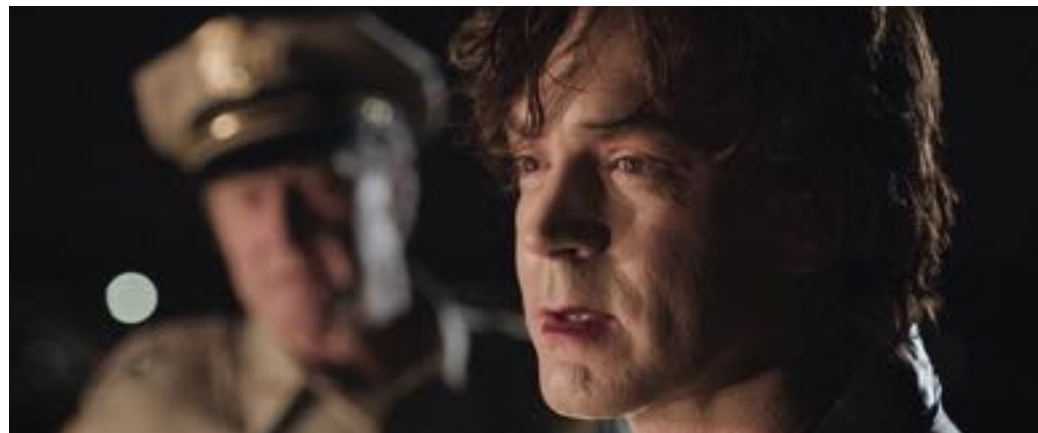
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Moments from the movie



Moments from the movie



Cast Bios



DOMINIC BOGART as LARRY BENSON

On television you can find DOMINIC in recurring roles on AMC's FEAR THE WALKING DEAD, The CW's ARROW, CBS's FBI, ABC's FLASHFORWARD, HBO's THE CHRIS ROCK SHOW, and the Netflix limited series AMERICAN PRIMEVAL.

On the big screen, he has leading roles in the 2025 Sundance selected SUNFISH (and Other Stories On Green Lake), SXSW selected sci-fi drama EXTRACTED, and the 2012 Sundance selected music drama I AM NOT A HIPSTER. And supporting roles in THE GLASS CASTLE (Lionsgate), JUST MERCY (Warner Brothers), CBGB, AMERICAN SKIN, and THE BIRTH OF A NATION (Fox Searchlight). Upcoming releases include a leading role in the sci-fi superhero drama SATURN, and supporting roles in the Peter Berg directed WWII epic THE MOSQUITO BOWL on Netflix, the Patsy Ponciroli/ Alan Ritchson silent action thriller MOTOR CITY, and the Gerard Butler action feature EMPIRE CITY.

[Dominic Bogart - IMDB](#)



JIJHI HISE as LILY WILLETS

Jiji Hise was born and raised in Roswell, New Mexico. She discovered her love of acting in High School as part of the Mummies Drama Club. After High School, Jiji attended New Mexico State University where she majored in Theatre Arts.

In 2008, Jiji landed her first SAG role in a film titled Inhale, starring Dermot Mulroney. Within a year, she had also been cast in Crash the Series and Breaking Bad. In 2017, Jiji was cast in the Coen Brothers' The Ballad of Buster Scruggs, acting along side Lian Neeson. Jiji saw a casting call for a role in a film called Mistake. The role was for a character that seemed almost written for her. Before too long, Jiji had a virtual meeting the writer/director of Mistake, Honey Lauren.

Playing Lily in Mistake has been one of the greatest honors of Jiji's life. To her, Lily is the epitome of how everyone should treat each other and utter care and understanding.

[Jiji Hise - IMDB](#)
www.jijihise.com



MATT BOGART as FATHER

Matt Bogart has starred in film, tv, and theatre productions such as Jersey Boys (feature starring Nick Jonas), Stargazer (feature, Producer & Best Actor laurels), as Robert Goulet in HBO's Vinyl (Dir., Martin Scorsese), The Good Fight, Smash, Law and Order and Law and Order: SVU.

Broadway shows Paradise Square, Jersey Boys, Aida, Smokey Joe's Café, Miss Saigon and The Civil War.

Matt has worked with Stephen Sondheim at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Kennedy Center. Matt is currently starring in Jeff Daniels' play, Norma & Wanda, at the Purple Rose Theatre and past productions of The Goat, True West, Orpheus Descending, and Jane Eyre.

Matt is also an accomplished recording artist and has several solo symphonic recordings on iTunes, including Matt Bogart Simple Song.

[Matt Bogart - IMDB](#)
www.mattbogart.com

Cast Bios



BRETT CULLEN

as SHERIFF

Originally from Houston, Texas, Peter Brett Cullen is a prolific actor who has built a long and impressive career. On the big screen, He is known for playing Thomas Wayne from Joker, Barton Blaze from Ghost Rider, Eddie Martel in The Replacements, Walt Riggins in Friday Night Lights and a Congressman in The Dark Knight Rises. He also acted in Apollo 13, Monk, The Guilt Trip and 42. His numerous television roles include Dan Fixx in Falcon Crest (1986–1988), Sam Cain in The Young Riders (1989–1990), Governor Ray Sullivan in The West Wing (2005–2006), Goodwin Stanhope in Lost (2005–2008), Mark Keeler in Make It or Break It (2009–2012), Nathan Ingram in Person of Interest, and Michael Stappord in Devious Maids (2013–2015). Cullen has given great credit to his highly acclaimed acting mentor and University of Houston professor, Cecil Pickett, who also mentored such Houston-born actors as Dennis Quaid, Randy Quaid.

[Brett Cullen - Wikipedia](#)

www.brettcullen.com



KAY LENZ

as MOTHER

Kay Ann Lenz is the recipient of a Daytime Emmy Award and a Primetime Emmy Award, as well as nominations for a Golden Globe Award and a Saturn Award.

Lenz is best known for her title role in the film Breezy (1973), for which she was nominated for a Golden Globe Award for Most Promising Newcomer. She is also known for her roles in the film House (1985), as well as the television series Midnight Caller (1988–1989) and Reasonable Doubts (1991–1993). For her role in the episode "After It Happened" of Midnight Caller, she won a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Guest Actress in a Drama Series.

Lenz made guest appearances in The Streets of San Francisco, Gunsmoke, MacGyver, McCloud, Cannon, and Petrocelli, and played a lead role in the film White Line Fever (1975) before being cast in 1976 in the miniseries Rich Man, Poor Man, for which she was nominated for an Emmy Award.

[Kay Lenz - Wikipedia](#)



BRANDON KEENER

as OFFICER WHITE

A proud native of Fort Smith, Arkansas, Brandon Keener is an accomplished actor who has built an impressive 20 year professional career in Los Angeles. Brandon has guest-starred on too many TV shows to list, but some of the cooler ones are HBO's The Pitt, Glow, Pen15, Swedish Dicks, Suits, HBO's Band of Brothers, Based on a True Story and an amazing part on Buffy the Vampire Slayer. His feature film work includes co-stars in Hustlers, Run Sweetheart Run, The Purge: Anarchy, He's Just Not That Into You, Zookeeper, The Guilt Trip, Full Frontal, Traffic and so many more. Brandon has also appeared in over 80 national commercials. In spite of his rigorous body of work, Brandon is perhaps best known for his voice-over role of Garrus Vakarian in the Mass Effect video game series, for which he actually occasionally receives fan mail. His two children Evelyn and Vincent have no idea who Garrus Vakarian is.

[Brandon Keener - IMDB](#)

filmmaker Bios



HONEY LAUREN

DIRECTOR • WRITER • ACTRESS

Honey Lauren is a multi award winning writer, director and actress, with over 100 film and TV credits and dozens of commercials. Emancipated at 16, Honey began studying at A.C.T. in San Francisco. From there she joined The Angels Of Light, an infamous theatre and dance group, which was an offshoot of the Cockettes, a drag group that featured such stars as Sylvester and Divine. Directors Honey has worked with include Luc Besson, Francis Ford Coppola, counter culture maven, Doris Wishman and Paul McCarthy. Honey has written for directors that include Abel Ferrara and Melvin van Peebles. Many of her screenplays won multiple awards. As a director her short film, DOT GOT SHOT won five major festivals including BEST FEMALE FILMMAKER and the acclaimed, WOMAN WITH A VISION AWARD. Honey's short documentary HAPPY HANDS with Tippi Hedren, won six film awards, and qualified for the Academy Awards in 2014. Honey's short film WIVES OF THE SKIES garnered over 40 awards. Honey is set to direct her next feature RIFLE DOLL in 2026.

[Honey Lauren - IMDB](#)

www.honeylauren.net



ERIK BAKKEN

PRODUCER

Born and raised in a small town in Minnesota, Erik Bakken took to moviemaking at a young age, seizing upon any chance to pick up his family's camcorder. He converted as many school projects as he could into filmmaking ventures and began absorbing as many films as possible. Spending years doing the deepest of dives into film style, history and theory, Erik became irredeemably hooked, doomed to be a lifelong obsessive of the cinema.

A product of his upbringing, Erik's career has been defined by his work ethic and dedication to being an asset on every project he joins. Having logged well over 100 hours of television and numerous films, he is a true utility player. Contributing to creative elements as well as providing leadership in logistics, management and finances, he keeps both his left and right brain firing in service of the art form he loves.

[Erik Bakken - IMDB](#)



DAVEY ROBERTSON

PRODUCER • DP • EDITOR

Originally from Toronto, Canada, and Buffalo, NY, Davey Robertson has been burning up the big and small screen in the Los Angeles film industry for over 20 years. He is an award winning writer/director and a prolific cinematographer who has tallied dozens of international awards, including the GOLDEN EAGLE from CANNES in 2012. He has over 150 hours of episodic television, multiple feature films, and dozens of national commercials to his credit.

He is particularly proud of work as Producer DP and Editor on the celebrated H.P. Lovecraft indi feature adaptations THE CALL OF CTHULHU and THE WHISPERER IN DARKNESS.

An artist from a young age, Davey caught the filmmaking bug in high school, strongly influenced by the works of David Lynch, The Coen Brothers, and Lasse Halstrom. His passion for the poetic has led him throughout his career to seek out the strange, artistic and unconventional. Davey is a life long die hard fan of the Buffalo Bills. GO BILLS.

[Davey Robertson - IMDB](#)

www.Destroyallmedia.com

filmmaker Bios



BRAD WYMAN PRODUCER

Brad Wyman is a veteran American film and television producer, Wyman has built a long career in Hollywood – contributing to more than 40 feature films, as well as a variety of television and digital projects.

He is best known for the crime-drama *Monster* (2003) a breakout hit that won widespread acclaim – and claimed a best actress oscar for Charlize Theron. Also he produced indie hits such as *Freeway* (1996), *The Dark Backward* (1991), *The Chase* (1994), *Trees Lounge* (1996), and *Barb Wire* (1996).

In addition to traditional film production, Wyman has expanded into the world of crowdfunding and digital content. He worked at Indiegogo as vertical lead for film, TV, and web content.

Later, he joined FundAnything as Chief Crowdfunding Officer (also described as head of its film/video/web division), leveraging his industry experience to guide fundraising campaigns for creative projects.

[Brad Wyman - IMDB](#)



DAVID SCHULTZ PRODUCER

David Shultz is the founder and president of Vitagraph Films, a self contained theatrical and home optical, television distribution entity. Currently, Vitagraph Films is consulting for First Look Studios on the distribution of *KIDS* director Larry Clark's latest film *WASSUP ROCKERS*. On May 5th Vitagraph will open for First Look, *THE PROPOSITION*, written by rocker, Nick Cave, and starring, Guy Pearce, Danny Huston, Emily Watson and Ray Winstone. *THE PROPOSITION* played in competition at major festivals including Toronto, Sundance and Berlin. Theatrically Vitagraph/American Cinematheque Presents... has re-released the legendary, but virtually unseen in the US, psychedelic, 60's relic, *WONDERWALL* (directed by *THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME* director Joe Massot) featuring a re-mastered, original score by then Beatle George Harrison.

www.vitagraphfilms.com



EMILIANO MAZZENGA COMPOSER

Emiliano Mazzenga is an award-winning Italian composer for film, TV and new media based in Los Angeles.

He has composed music for a variety of films and series which premiered at important film festivals and theaters, such as Tribeca Festival, LA Shorts, TCL Chinese Theatre, and Lincoln Center. Among them, he scored the feature films 'Void', 'The Driven', 'A Rising Fury', 'Nochebuena', 'Short Adam' series, and the 'Minimad' web series which reached over 150 million views on YouTube. Emiliano won 20 Best Music Awards for the scores he wrote for 'Dali', 'Landing', 'Beta' and 'Night Encounter'.

He recorded and conducted his music with several ensembles and orchestras in renowned studios such as Warner Bros Eastwood Scoring Stage, Capitol Studios, East West Studios, and Synchron Stage Vienna.

In addition, he has been part of the music teams for acclaimed Hollywood films and series like *Creed 3* and *The Mandalorian*.

www.emilianomazzenga.com

Mistake Links

Official Website:

<https://destroyallmedia.com/mistake-film.html>

Official Trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/1155710081>

PW redheads

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/mistake_film_

Mistake IMDB:

<https://www.imdb.com/mistake>

Press - Variety:

<https://variety.com/mistake>

Press - Boy Culture:

<https://www.boyculture.com/p/born-different>

Sales/Distribution - Circus Road Films:

www.circusroadfilms.com

Festival Strategist - Nancy Collet:

www.cinemascollet.com

