



Jeffrey Donovan

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Jeffrey Donovan (born May 11, 1968)^[1] is an American actor and director. He played Michael Westen in the television series *Burn Notice*, and starred in films such as *Hitch*, *Believe in Me*, *Changeling* and *Come Early Morning*. He played Robert F. Kennedy in Clint Eastwood's *J. Edgar* (2011)^[2] and his brother John F. Kennedy in Rob Reiner's *LBJ*. He had a recurring role in the second season of the TV series *Fargo* (2015).

Early life

Donovan was born in Amesbury, Massachusetts,^[1] and raised along with two brothers, Michael and Sean, by their mother, Nancy Matthews.^[3] Of his childhood, Donovan recalled:

I grew up really poor. We grew up on welfare – a single mom with three boys. We didn't have anything. Christmas would come around, she'd rewrap gifts she'd given us before. We moved about 10 times in my childhood. When you come home from school and the lights don't go on, you think: we're moving! You can't pay electric bills on welfare. We became very frugal.^[4]

At Amesbury High School, Donovan was mentored by teacher Patricia Hoyt. She helped him start a drama club^[5] and subsequently found him a private scholarship, enabling him to participate in a summer program that helped pave the way for his acting career.^[6] He attended Bridgewater State College before transferring to the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in drama.

Jeffrey Donovan



Donovan in November 2009

Born	May 11, 1968 <div>Amesbury, Massachusetts, U.S.</div>
Occupation	Actor
Years active	1995–present
Spouse	Michelle Woods (m. 2012)
Children	2

While attending university, Donovan was a commercial bus driver at UMass Transit Service, where he operated passenger buses as part of the PVTA. He went on to earn his Master of Fine Arts from New York University's Graduate Acting Program at the Tisch School of the Arts.

Career

Television

Donovan has guest-starred in several television shows, including *CSI: Miami*, *Spin City*, *Monk*, *Millennium*, *Witchblade*, *The Pretender*, *Homicide: Life on the Street* and *Law & Order*. In the short-lived TV series *Threshold*, Donovan played the antihero Dr. Sloan. Donovan also played the recurring role of William Ivers in *Crossing Jordan*. In 2004, he had his first leading role in the American remake of the British television series *Touching Evil* with Vera Farmiga on the USA Network.

From 2007 to 2013, Donovan starred in *Burn Notice*, as Michael Westen, a spy who was burned, seemingly by the CIA or Homeland Security, for reasons unknown to him, and marooned in Miami, Florida. The show follows Westen as he attempts to find out why he was burned and regain his job as a covert intelligence agent, in addition to bringing justice to the good people of Miami. Donovan made his directorial debut with the series' episode, "Made Man" which first aired on June 17, 2010. Donovan also directed a prequel film starring co-star Bruce Campbell, titled *Burn Notice: The Fall of Sam Axe*, which first aired on USA Network on April 17, 2011. The series lasted for seven seasons, received positive reviews from both fans and critics, and was nominated for four Primetime Emmy Awards.

In 2015, Donovan had a recurring role on *Fargo* as North Dakota mobster Dodd Gerhardt. In 2016, he began starring as Tarot-reading con artist Charlie Haverford in *Shut Eye* on Hulu. *Shut Eye* has been renewed for a second season.

Theatre

Donovan has also performed on stage in various productions, including *Hamlet* as the eponymous title character, *A View from the Bridge* as Marco, *An Inspector Calls*, and Off-Broadway in *Things You Shouldn't Say Past Midnight* as Gene, *The Glory of Living* as Clint, regionally in *Toys in the Attic* as Julian Berniers, *On the Waterfront* as Terry, *Oedipus* as Teiresias and *Freedomland* as Seth. From October 2008 until spring 2009, Jeffrey starred in the comedy farce *Don't Dress for Dinner* in Chicago. Donovan has also performed in the radio dramas *On the Waterfront* (as Terry), *Frozen*, and *Grapes of Wrath*.

Personal life

Donovan has over 20 years of martial arts experience. In college, he earned his black belt in Shotokan karate and competed throughout the state. Later, he studied aikido for over six years and Brazilian jiu-jitsu.^[7]

On July 3, 2009, Donovan, a Boston Red Sox fan since childhood, threw the ceremonial first pitch at the game between the Red Sox and the Seattle Mariners at Fenway Park.^[8] On July 3, 2010, he once again threw the ceremonial first pitch at Fenway Park, this time at a match between the Red Sox and the Baltimore Orioles.^[9]

On July 12, 2009, Donovan was arrested in Miami, Florida for allegedly driving under the influence; charges were reduced to reckless driving.^[10]

Donovan married Michelle Woods on August 25, 2012. They had a daughter in December 2012.^[11]

Philanthropy

In 2009, Donovan returned to Amesbury High School where he took part in a career day mentorship program with other successful professionals and presented the school with a \$100,000 arts scholarship program.^[12] The first \$10,000 award was given out to a senior that June.^[13]

For many years, Donovan has actively supported Life Rolls On (LRO), a foundation empowering people with spinal cord injuries. On October 4, 2009 he served as one of the chairmen for the 6th Annual LRO annual fundraiser called Night by the Ocean at the Kodak Theater.^[14] Donovan was named Grand Marshal of the 22nd annual AIDS Walk Miami held on April 17, 2010.^[15]

Donovan also supports his friends' charity events. In September 2009, while helping Michael Bolton at the 17th Annual Benefit Concert for Women and Children at Risk in Stamford, Connecticut, Donovan auctioned off a "Burn Notice walk-on-part" plus a kiss. Walk on parts usually raise \$2,000–\$5,000. With the added kiss, he raised \$36,000.^[16]

Filmography

Television

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1995	<i>Homicide: Life on the Street</i>	Miles and Newton Dell	Episode: "Thrill of the Kill"
1995, 2007	<i>Law & Order</i>	Edward Nicodos / Jacob Reese	2 episodes
1997	<i>Millennium</i>	Bobby Webber	Episode: " <u>The Wild and the Innocent</u> "
1997	<i>Another World</i>	Dwayne 'Popper' Collins	
1997–98	<i>The Pretender</i>	Kyle	3 episodes
1999	<i>Spin City</i>	Tom	2 episodes
2000	<i>The Beat</i>	Brad Ulrich	
2002	<i>Witchblade</i>	Daniel Germaine	Episode: "Lagrimas"
2004	<i>Touching Evil</i>	Detective Inspector Dave Creegan	12 episodes
2005	<i>CSI: Miami</i>	Todd Kendrick	1 episode
2006	<i>Threshold</i>	Dr. Julian Sloan	Episode: Vigilante

2006	<u><i>Monk</i></u>	Steve Wagner	Episode: "Mr. Monk and the Astronaut"
2007	<u><i>Crossing Jordan</i></u>	William Ivers	5 episodes
2007–13	<u><i>Burn Notice</i></u>	<u>Michael Westen</u>	111 episodes (Main role) Directed season 4 episode "Made Man", season 6 episode "Mixed Message" and season 7 episode "Forget Me Not"
2011	<u><i>Burn Notice: The Fall of Sam Axe</i></u>	Michael Westen	Director and executive producer also made a cameo
2015	<u><i>Fargo</i></u>	Dodd Gerhardt	Recurring Role, Season 2
2016	<u><i>Shut Eye</i></u>	Charlie Haverford	Season 1 (Main role)

Film

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1995	<i>Throwing Down</i>	Pete Gulley	
1996	<u><i>Sleepers</i></u>	Henry Addison	
1996	<i>Critical Choices</i>	Randy	
1997	<u><i>Vegas Vacation</i></u>	Hotel employee	
1997	<i>Catherine's Grove</i>	Thomas Mason	
1998	<u><i>Witness to the Mob</i></u>	Agent	
1998	<u><i>When Trumpets Fade</i></u>	Bobby	
2000	<u><i>Bait</i></u>	Julio	
2000	<u><i>Book of Shadows: Blair Witch 2</i></u>	Jeffrey Patterson	Nominated – <u>Golden Raspberry Award for Worst Screen Couple</u> (with any two actors)
2002	<i>Purpose</i>	Robert Jennings	
2003	<i>Final Draft</i>	Pascal	
2003	<i>Sam & Joe</i>	Eric	
2005	<u><i>Hitch</i></u>	Vance Munson	
2006	<u><i>Come Early Morning</i></u>	Cal Percell	
2006	<u><i>Believe in Me</i></u>	Clay Driscoll	
2007	<u><i>Hindsight</i></u>	Paul	
2008	<u><i>Changeling</i></u>	Captain J.J. Jones	
2011	<u><i>J. Edgar</i></u>	Robert F. Kennedy	
2015	<u><i>Sicario</i></u>	Steve Forsing	

2015	<u><i>Extinction</i></u>	Jack	
2016	<u><i>Shot Caller</i></u>	Bottles	
2016	<u><i>LBJ</i></u>	John F. Kennedy	
2018	<u><i>Soldado</i></u>	Steve Forcing	

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External links

- [Jeffrey Donovan \(https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-cast-staff/70374\)](https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-cast-staff/70374) at the [Internet Broadway Database](#)
 - [Jeffrey Donovan \(https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0232998/\)](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0232998/) at [IMDb](#)
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