



A FILM BY MICHAEL KLEPACKI

APHASIA

A THE FIRE DEPARTMENT PRODUCTION
RYAN AYD NICOLE SMITH "APHASIA" MUSIC BY NATHAN FOX
COSTUME DESIGNER JULIA HARRIS PRODUCTION DESIGNER MAKAHLA HARAPAT PROSTHECIS DESIGN AMBER GLASRUD
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY EVAN WHITE PRODUCED BY EDUARDO SAEZ CANO TYLER HILL ERIN CANTRELL
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY MICHAEL KLEPACKI

LOGLINE

After the end of the world, a boy meets a girl.

SYNOPSIS (SHORT)

After the world has come to an end, a lonely survivor fights off his infection and finds hope in an unexpected encounter.

SYNOPSIS (LONG)

A deadly fungal virus has wiped out most of the human population. Cities have been largely abandoned in favor of quarantine centers, leaving the streets empty and desolate. It is in these lonely streets where we find The Boy, wandering aimlessly and fighting a losing battle with the fungal growths that sprout from his neck and face. Surely it's only a matter of time until the parasitic infection bests him.

Enter: The Girl. Hardly believing his eyes, The Boy sees her up in a window, seemingly perfectly healthy. This is it - his last chance to connect.

So it's time to pull out all the stops. A good old-fashioned serenade. After all - the world is already over. What left does he have to lose?

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ABOUT THE FILM

Aphasia is two stories. It is the journey of one lonely, broken soul desperately seeking connection after civilization has crumbled, one last attempt to reach out – until it isn't. It quickly becomes a story about survival, told from another perspective.

For the director and producers, key to APHASIA was tone. Finding and refining that tone was a process that carried Michael, Tyler, Eduardo, and Erin from the earliest days of development to the late stages of post-production. Post-apocalyptic zombie films have been done before. Love stories have been before. Even zombie love stories weren't new! But they were determined to set APHASIA apart with the way it made you feel.

Instrumental to this tone was the pacing in the edit, and Nathan Fox's gorgeous score. A few rounds of temp tracks in post-production led the filmmakers to an old-timey, romanticized soundscape. This added an essence of timelessness to the film, as well as a sweetness that allowed the ending to land with even more impact and dark humor.

APHASIA was a labor of love about love itself, loneliness, and painful reality.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The idea for APHASIA started simply enough all the way back in 2011 – what if a zombie fell in love with a healthy human? I tabled the idea for years – especially as a major studio produced a film with basically that exact premise – until I decided to pick it back up in late 2017. But throughout the entire process, key to the story was the ending. The twist, the tonal shift, was as obvious as the premise itself is preposterous. Who the hell could love a zombie?!

But that shift only really worked if we were rooting for our zombie boy as long as we could. So we spend most of the film looking at him with a sweetly nostalgic soundtrack and humanizing him as a sympathetic, doomed soul. As impossible as it may be, we want to believe that maybe it could work – until The Girl brings sensible reality crashing in. This isn't a love story. It's a story about common sense.



WRITER / DIRECTOR

Michael Klepacki is a filmmaker newly based in Los Angeles. He has had a passion for telling stories as long as he can remember, and discovered the unique magic of film in early high school. APHASIA is his third short film. His previous film, DAY TRIPPERS, won Best Actor and was selected for the Best Of Screening at the 2018 Albuquerque 48 Hour Film Festival. APRIL IN OCTOBER, a microfilm, took second place in a contest held by director Felix Alcala. Commercially, Michael has been commissioned by Albuquerque-based artist Zuavé to make music videos for L.I.F.E. and HIT YOU WHERE IT HURTS. Michael hopes to keep making short films for the next couple years before diving into the world of features.



PRODUCER

Tyler Hill graduated from The University of New Mexico's film program in 2015, but his love of film unfolded years before that. His passion for film started with the movies of Quentin Tarantino, where he found a love of storytelling and writing. He co-produced HIT YOU WHERE IT HURTS, and worked on the short film FRAGMENTS with director Michael Klepacki.

Tyler also has a handful of scripts and treatments up his sleeve, and a co-writing credit on an upcoming short film coming from The Fire Department.

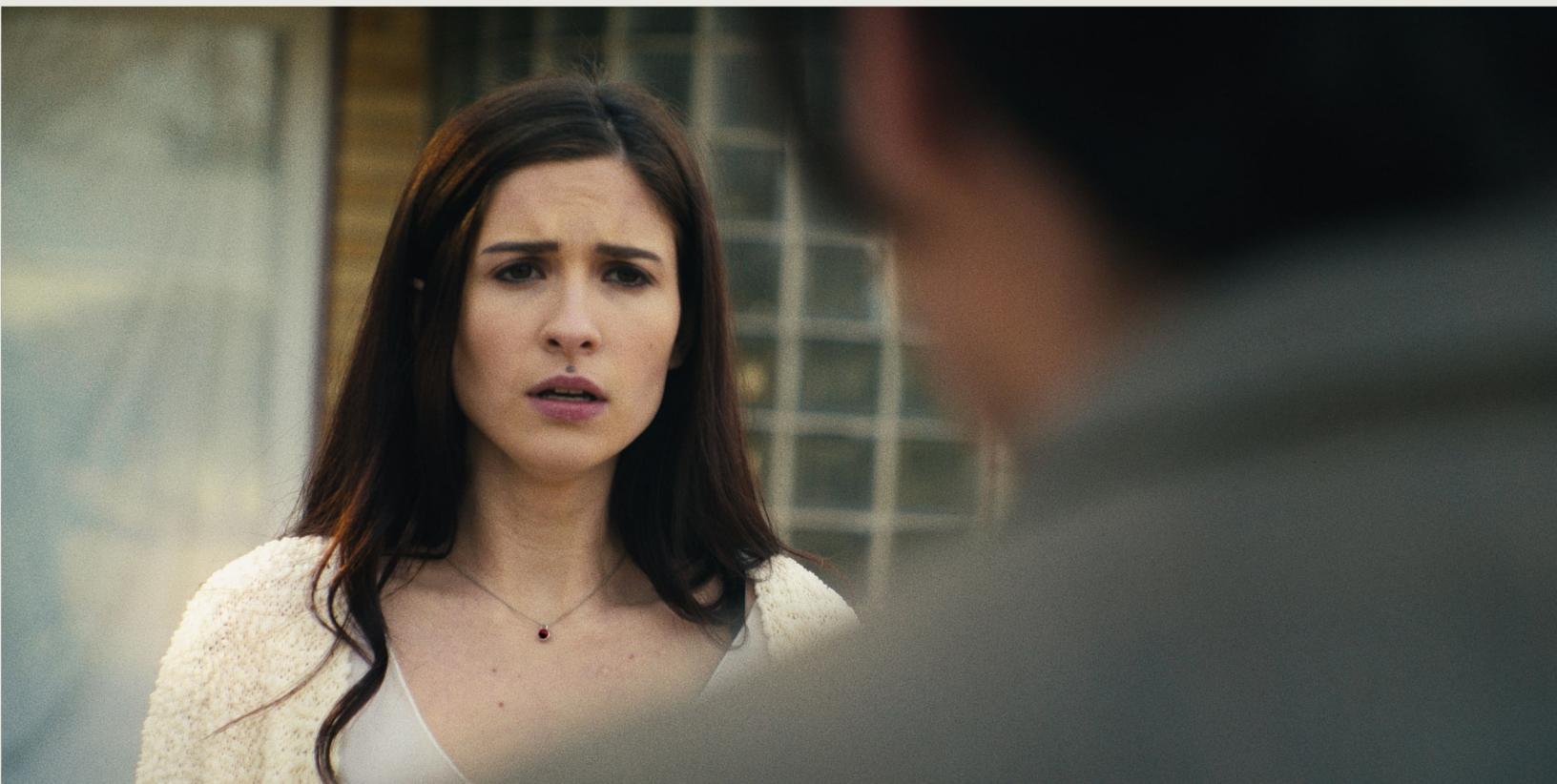


"THE BOY"

Ryan Ayd is a singer and aspiring actor. While he began acting at a very young age, Ryan only began to pursue the performing arts professionally within the past few years, appearing in a number of plays, local television shows, and APHASIA. He aspires to continue playing a role in stories with a strong message.

Nicole Smith is an actress based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Though new to the film scene, she is quickly making a reputation for herself. In 2018 she won the sole Best Actor award at the Albuquerque 48 Hour Film Festival, in the short film DAY TRIPPERS. She has a handful of upcoming projects, and is currently seeking representation.

"THE GIRL"



FULL CREDITS

Written and Directed by: Michael Klepacki

Produced by: Eduardo Saenz Cano, Tyler Hill, Erin Cantrell

Principal Cast: Ryan Ayd, Nicole Smith

Supporting Cast: Jon Berry

Cinematographer: Evan White

Prosthetics Designer: Amber Glasrud

Production Designer: Makahla Harapat

Costume Designer: Julia Harris

Editor: Michael Klepacki

Music by: Nathan Fox

Associate Producer: Michelle Negrette

First Assistant Director: Laura Connolly

Add'l First AD: Sale Taylor

Stunt Coordinator / Set PA: Kevin Chambers

Script Supervisor: Eduardo Saenz Cano

First Assistant Camera: Shawn C. Smith

Second Assistant Camera: Alexander Lucero

Gaffer: Colemar Nichols

Key Grip: Jannis Schelenz

Production Sound Mixer: Noe Gomez

On-Set Dresser / Greensperson: Jacqueline Pettitt

Key Makeup Artist / Hair: Jerrad Gray

Add'l Makeup Artist: Robert Posey

Key Costumer: Mary Bowman

Locations Manager / Set PA: John Blankenship

Craft Service: Erin Cantrell

Sound Designer / Re-Recording Mixer: Nathan Fox

VFX Artist: Tyler Hill

CONTACT

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TRAILER

[YouTube Link](#)

LINKS

Instagram: [aphasiashortfilm](#)

Website: [michaelklepacki.com/aphasia](#)

Full film available by request.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Runtime: 7 min 44 seconds

Color

Format: Digital 4k

Aspect Ratio: 2.00:1

Sound: Stereo

Completed: October 2019

Language: English

Country of Origin: United States

Screening Format: ProRes MP4