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## From a “Lazy Boy” to the Open Sea. The journey of making “Call Me Cappy”

Maja M. Holzinger  
majapulcheria@gmail.com

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From a “Lazy Boy” to the Open Sea.  
The journey of making “Call Me Cappy”

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts  
in  
Film & Theatre Arts  
Film Production

by

Maja Holzinger

M.A. Adam Mickiewicz University, 2008

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Assistant Director
ADR	Automatic Dialogue Recording
DP	Director of Photography
IMDB	Internet Movie Database
PAC	Performing Arts Center
UNO	University of New Orleans

## ABSTRACT

In this paper I will describe and analyze the process of creating my thesis film, *Call Me Cappy*. I will start with stating the theme and discuss each aspect of this process in relation to the theme that inspired this project. I will detail my biggest challenges and struggles. I will also try to show how the knowledge I absorbed through attending the graduate film program, and the literature I have read, have served my journey as a filmmaker. In the end, I will attempt to evaluate whether my theme found its full expression through this film. The final analysis will determine how well I was able to incorporate all the aspects of storytelling into creating a coherent piece of work.

Keywords: short film, Call Me Cappy, journey, Midwest, Maja Holzinger

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

I believe that a deep and inherent sense of unity is the most important thing about any artistic attempt. This unity comes from the author's connection to the theme of the work. The theme can be grasped in a statement that an author believes in. It can also be a feeling we experience, or even more abstractly, a sense of some truth we feel deeply and are trying to express through our work. *Call Me Cappy's* theme was born from the Buddhist saying:

“We are what we think, having become what we thought.”

The Buddha, from the *Dhammapada*

For me, it is also important that the theme can be interpreted on many levels. I prefer to work with something that is more of an “open book” than a statement. In the end, I'm not making a film to state something as a universal truth, but I'm trying to create work that will feel like an invitation to a dialog. In the last shot of my short film, *Call Me Cappy*, I leave the audience with an open horizon and the main character, Wally, swimming toward the unknown. It is a symbolic ending that invites the viewers to continue the story for themselves. It is up to them to imagine what happens to the character and what the conclusion is, if any. I believe that artistry comes from raising questions rather than making any definitive statement. Theme is the essence of a film and, in my belief, it should lie at the heart of every artistic choice made on the project. Otherwise, the final work will not achieve unity. The process of creating my film was a constant search for the choices that would best reflect this unity.

Creating a film, as well as any artistic piece, is a process of materializing one's thoughts. The craft comes from the ability to translate those thoughts onto the screen. “We are what we think, having become what we thought.” In my understanding of this phrase, whatever we think and whatever we do shapes who we are and where we can go next with our lives. This applies not only to the protagonist of my film but also to myself as a beginning filmmaker.

The protagonist of *Call Me Cappy*, Wally, has a dream. It comes to him through a junk mail scam, and the audience knows from the beginning that this dream cannot be achieved in the

way that Wally imagines it. However, the very fact that he has a dream triggers his imagination, makes him do new things and take on new challenges; gradually, this dream shapes him into a new person. In the key moment of the film, Wally realizes that he is now capable of taking his destiny into his own hands. Slowly, he realizes things are possible and he's only limited by his own imagination. In the last scene of the film, the open horizon that we see becomes a visual expression of Wally's transition as a person. His horizon has broadened. The end of the film signifies the opening of something new in his life, in his mind. Through inspiration we find dreams and ideas. Through pursuing these impulses we grow as people and change who we are.

Even though I hope the film will find its audience, in a way, I made it for myself; I wanted to make a film that I would want to see on screen. The director, Krzysztof Kieslowski once said: "Every director makes movies for himself. If they claim otherwise, they lie."<sup>1</sup> We tell stories we want to hear. We tell them to ourselves more than to anyone else. Stating it that way, filmmaking could seem like a self-involved practice to satisfy one's own ego. However, the way I understand Kieslowski's words is not as a self-indulgent approach to our work. The story we want to hear is the only story we can tell with honesty. It is the way to achieve the unity between the theme, the story, the film and the author.

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<sup>1</sup> Krzysztof Kieślowski, *Autobiografia* (Kraków 2012) 64.



## CHAPTER 2

### WRITE SIMPLE STORIES AND COMPLEX CHARACTERS

#### THE WRITING OF *CALL ME CAPPY*

The story of Wally MacDonald, an ordinary bowling alley employee from a small town in the Midwest, first took shape in a Fall 2012 Graduate Course, *Concept, Conflict, and Character*, taught by Henry Griffin. The short story “Call Me Cappy” was written by Melissa Remark, a creative writing student, for an assignment in Griffin’s class. The assignment required us to suggest a statement that we believed was true, but at the same time, could be debatable. Melissa chose the Buddhist proverb from the book of *Dhammapada* as her premise. The story it inspired was only two pages long and featured the basic plot that eventually became the core narrative of my film.

As soon as I read her piece, I felt an immediate connection with it. It struck me how simple yet meaningful it was. The author of the book *Directing Fundamentals*, Nicholas Proferes, suggests: “Write simple stories and complex characters.”<sup>2</sup> Melissa’s writing followed this advice; it was a character-driven story, limited to simple events yet revealing subtle and nuanced character psychology. After the class, I approached Melissa, whom I did not know at this point, to congratulate her on her writing. I mentioned that the story had great visual potential and could be turned into a short film. That was it, at that time. Soon after, Melissa dropped the class. A couple of weeks later, I woke up in the middle of the night and started thinking about the story. Since I couldn’t fall back to sleep, I sat on the porch and looked at the dark, silent street of my neighborhood. The idea was coming to me in the best possible way, materializing itself slowly, without me forcing it. I let it linger in my mind and slowly started envisioning the story as a short film.

However, as the next semester approached, I enrolled in the thesis screenwriting class. I decided to create my own screenplay. I thought, “Call Me Cappy” was too complicated, with its many locations including the Midwest, a tropical beach, and a bowling alley. So I wrote my own story. However, as the semester progressed, and the time to submit the screenplay for my thesis film was approaching, I realized that I did not feel as strongly for this new idea as I did for

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<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, 15.

*Cappy*. I decided to find Melissa and see if she would write a script based on her short story for me. I emailed her, and she responded almost immediately with the few first pages of the new script. Apparently, she'd been thinking about the project, as well. We met sometime in April, and ever since then we knew that we were going to make this film. What was initially a two-page story quickly bloomed into a larger-scale project. We began the process of collaboration, during which she let me have an insight into her writing.

The first few pages she wrote already had a clear shape of the characters and a vivid story world. We started by discussing the phrase that was the original inspiration for the story. It was important that we both agreed on what the heart of the script was. The way we worked became a set pattern. First, we talked about the characters. We bounced some ideas for the scenes back and forth. Then, Melissa would take some time writing another draft. After I read it, we would meet again and talk some more. We evaluated what worked and what did not. Then, the whole process would repeat.

We went through many drafts together. The first full version of the script reached 25 pages; we both agreed that the film should be significantly shorter. It is a very simple story, and there were not enough subplots to justify a half-hour film. Besides, I had a page limitation given to me by the department. From there, we started working on consolidating the scenes and making the characters more specific. At this point, we welcomed some feedback from the faculty and trusted friends. Erik Hansen worked with us, during weekly meetings, on making the script more concise and specific to the theme. After several months of work, Melissa and I sat together and looked at the entire script. We created labels for each scene on small index cards. Then, we started shifting the scenes in different ways and evaluating the relevance of each one. We also tried to determine what was the best way to transition between these scenes. As a result, during this process, some scenes would be moved to a different place in the script, and this would change their purpose; some scenes were dropped entirely. For example, the scene of Wally meeting the Tattooed Girl, who speaks to him with a quote from *Moby Dick* (*I am tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote*) was initially used early on in the script as a stepping-stone. It showed Wally being encouraged into pursuing his dream. Upon revision, this scene ended up serving as a turning point right before the climax. It became Wally's moment of realization, "waking up from his dream," in order to pursue this dream in reality.

The main challenge of the writing process was to find the thread that would connect all

the scenes. I feel that Melissa had some great ideas for transitions that would be meaningful on a psychological level. She incorporated different tools of filmmaking, including sound cues. For example, the first time Wally enters his dream, we transition from his wife Gloria's snoring to the sound of the gentle surf. The story isn't plot-driven, which made the flow and the structure challenging to perfect. Each scene was designed solely to deepen the understanding of the main character. The dramatic tension in this story comes from subtext. There are no physical obstacles separating the character from his goal of changing his life. It is all about Wally's psychology. The challenge was to find a strong narrative thread that would allow for the audience to easily track Wally's journey.

The process of working with a writer was an important experience for me. I learned to be a better collaborator. I learned to find balance between what the writer envisions and what I ultimately felt was right for the story. During the process of writing the script, we would often get lost; we couldn't find a sense of rhythm. What always brought us back on track was recalling the theme, what it meant to us, and what it really meant to Wally's life.

I believe that, in the end, the screenplay for *Call Me Cappy* preserved the simple story I initially fell in love with. However, despite the simplicity of the plot, the protagonist is revealed to be quite complex, over the course of the story. I think that Melissa found the full expression of the theme through exploring the subtleties of the character's journey. The final draft was 18 pages long and we felt it was ready to shoot.

## THE STORY

*Call Me Cappy* is a heart-warming drama, filled with subtle humor. The main character of *Call Me Cappy* is Wally, a bowling alley manager in his 60's, living in the small town of North Platte, Nebraska. He leads a perfectly uneventful life, dominated by his wife Gloria. Together they have fallen into a comfortable routine, filled with *Wheel of Fortune*, TV dinners, and weekly bingo.

The story starts when Wally receives a piece of junk mail informing him that he has won a tropical cruise on a yacht. Despite his wife Gloria's disdain, Wally slowly becomes more and more intrigued by the idea of going on a tropical cruise and seeing the ocean for the first time. He secretly calls the number from the flier, provides his information, and is told to await the

prize in the mail. From then on, his imagination is fed with images of girls in bikinis and vast oceans. He enters a dream reality where he becomes a different person: a self-confident captain of the ship, surrounded by pretty girls, sailing toward the unknown. Wally starts doing things he has never done before. He reads *Moby Dick*. He joins a senior swimming club at the local YMCA and eventually learns how to swim.

However, time passes by, and Wally does not receive his promised prize in the mail. Instead, very similar-looking junk mail arrives. This is the moment when Wally finally has to face the fact that the whole thing was just a scam. He's back in his "lazy boy" chair, with a TV dinner and *Wheel of Fortune* on. When Wally is at this low point, a young, pretty girl stops by his counter at the bowling alley and notices his novel, *Moby Dick*, sitting on the counter. She speaks to him with a quote from the novel. They share a moment of connection. Up until now, Wally has lived in two separate worlds: reality and dream. At this point, his dream blends with reality.

"The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up" (Paul Valery). Wally fixes his truck and confronts Gloria for the first time. Then, he sets off for a road trip to Florida. As he takes his first steps on the warm sand of Pensacola beach, he sees the ocean for the very first time. In the distance, he spots a white sailboat. Wally knows he'll never be that guy on the boat. But he is in the moment, here and now. In the last shot of the film, Wally enters the water and starts swimming into the open ocean.

## CHAPTER 3 MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

### PRE-PRODUCTION

The first and most crucial step before entering the pre-production stage was to find a producer. I asked Andrea Kuehnel, a friend of mine from the Film Department. I've always known her to be a very organized, extremely reliable and intelligent person. I also thought her comments regarding the cut of my previous project, *Rosebud*, were very insightful. At this point, it was a more or less intuitive decision to ask Andrea to become the producer of my thesis film. It proved to be a deciding factor. I simply don't think I would have been able to perform a production of that scale without Andrea's input.

We started our weekly production meetings about four months before the planned shoot. The first thing we did was create a timeline for the project. Melissa Remark joined the team as a second producer. However, we decided that Andrea would take on the role as main producer for the pre-production stage, and Melissa, for the time being, would stick to her role as the writer. Melissa did step into producing during the days preceding the shoot and took over the leadership for the post-production and promotion stage.

After creating the timeline, we focused on completing the crew. The second-year course taught by Laura Medina, Film Planning and Development, was a big help in this process. We tried to follow the steps of pre-production, according to the methods taught in the course. The main collaborator at this point was Margaret Broach, the production and graphic designer of the project. Together, we created a portfolio of the project, which was Andrea's idea.

The portfolio is a document that summarizes my artistic intentions for the film. Apart from the synopsis, biographical notes and basic information about the project, it presented the color palette for the film and conveyed the visual style of the future production. It was not only a great tool to introduce people to the project and gain their interest, but also it helped us gather all the ideas and pre-visualize the film together. Creating a portfolio makes the director and the key collaborators ask themselves questions that would typically arise later, when there is less time to search for the right answers. It was a great opportunity for me to share my vision with the existing crew, as well as a chance for them to offer their creative input. It was a way for everyone to get on the same page. I have found that a well thought-out portfolio can create a

great deal of anticipation for the future project.

The weekly production meetings grew as more collaborators joined the team. Choosing a cinematographer was a big step. I considered three candidates. As I was rather unsure which one to go with, I decided to have a short meeting with each one of them. This strategy was suggested to me by Laura Medina, who helped me through this and many other obstacles I encountered. Those meetings not only let me hear the cinematographer's visual ideas, but it also helped me have a clear idea of how I intended to approach the cinematography in this project. After the three meetings, I chose Trenton Mynatt, a graduate student in the department. The main factor in my decision was his previous work. He achieved a professional look and consistent style within each project.

The budget for my project came mostly from the Jeri Nims Foundation Scholarship. The award of \$10,000 helped immensely to meet all the artistic goals.

Andrea, who kept making sure we did not exceed our budget, closely monitored the expenses. She was also very talented in coming up with the thriftiest solutions to meet each need. Through thorough research, she ensured we never spent more money than necessary and that we obtained whatever we could for free. The budget also included my award in the Pitch Perfect competition at the New Orleans Film Festival (\$1000) where I first presented the idea for *Call Me Cappy* to a broader audience.

I believe the story benefited greatly from these funds. The benefits of having a substantial budget were seen mostly in the areas of casting, production design, and post-production sound. For example, being able to travel to the coast and rent a sailboat enabled me to create the final scene of the film the way I imagined it. It would have been extremely hard, if not impossible, to create the same sense of closure without the means to shoot the final scene.

Upon receiving the grant from the Jeri Nims Foundation, Melissa organized a meeting for us with local director Zack Godshall. Receiving such a significant contribution carries a responsibility to spend it well. Zack's main suggestion was to designate a significant portion of the budget for professional post-production sound work, which proved to be very useful advice. I was able to ask the professional sound editor, Jon Vogl, to create the soundscape for my film. This opportunity would have been out of my reach without the grant.

In the beginning stages of pre-production, I experienced some anxiety about the challenges of the project. I had a feeling that there was not enough time to shoot in December

2013, as planned. I was considering postponing the production. Andrea pointed at the schedule and, with confidence, persuaded me that we could get everything ready in time. The first part of the film shoot was supposed to take place over a month ahead of time. It was the beach scene in which Wally walks into the water. We knew that after October the water would be too cold. I suggested we postpone the shoot until the spring semester. Andrea pushed me to fit the trip into the first weekend of October. She made it happen. After that, I knew we would manage to get this somewhat complicated shoot to happen on time. Due to Andrea's diligence, we had no extended shooting days.

The biggest lesson from the pre-production stage of *Call Me Cappy* was to try not to get overwhelmed by the large amount of tasks. With enough perseverance, everything can go according to plan. Problems arose and were solved as we went. Pre-production was a particularly challenging part of the process for me. Getting organized and being able to think ahead of time are not my strengths. Having Andrea by my side made things possible. I don't think there are many student-producers who approach their job as seriously as Andrea does.

The whole stage of pre-production is about "making things happen." It's a fascinating process during which things that I first saw as out-of-reach became possible.

## CHAPTER 4 NOTHING IS ORIGINAL

### INSPIRATIONS

Nothing is original. Steal from anywhere that resonates with inspiration or fuels your imagination. Devour old films, new films, music, books, paintings, photographs, poems, dreams, random conversations, architecture, bridges, street signs, trees, clouds, bodies of water, light and shadows. Select only things to steal from that speak directly to your soul. If you do this, your work (and theft) will be authentic. Authenticity is invaluable; originality is non-existent.<sup>3</sup>

As a Film Studies graduate whose life is filled with watching films, I am deeply immersed in the world of cinema. My cinematic horizon is vast in both time and space. I adore the silent films of Charlie Chaplin. I'm amazed at the vitality of performance by silent film actress Clara Bow, whose cinematic charisma, in my view, hasn't been surpassed by any other actress. My inspirations include films by Polanski, Kieslowski, Jarmusch, Wenders and Kaurismaki, to mention a few. I enjoy immersing myself in the world of visual symbols created by the Korean director Kim Ki Duk. In my own cinematic attempts, I strive to elevate the most ordinary situations as prominently as the young Mexican director, Fernando Eimbcke (*Lake Tahoe, Duck Season*) or Sofia Coppola (*Lost in Translation, Somewhere*). I am impressed by the recent works of Greek and Romanian directors, who are finding new cinematic tools to tell their stories in nonconformist ways. They drift far away from conventional rules of common film grammar. They prove that original, honest voices will find their audience.

I can't determine objectively to what extent my passion for watching certain films and my overall cinematic taste have affected my own work. Movies we watch over and over again become part of our own film language. Every movie in some way reflects what has been done before. I can hear Eric Rohmer in Richard Linklater's films, while Michel Gondry seems to be quoting *L'Atalante* by Jean Vigo in his latest film *Mood Indigo*. I love finding these connections and seeing film history as one evolving organism that develops and changes in front of our eyes, always taking from what has been done before, as much as inventing new unique ways to tell stories. I believe that elements of films we love sneak up on us in the whirl of the creative

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<sup>3</sup> Jim Jarmusch, "5 Golden Rules (or non-rules) of Moviemaking" in *Moviemaker Magazine*, January 22, 2004



process. It might be a certain composition, the use of color or just an overall idea for a scene. The inspiration that comes into making a certain project cannot be fully grasped by the author/director. However, I did come into the production of *Call Me Cappy* with a few clear inspirations in my mind.

There are authors who accompany my thought process every time I go into a production. All the authors I feel especially inspired by share one important quality: their cinema comes from a belief that an author cannot entirely know the characters. The characters are in a way left alone. We get to know them through observation, without the camera pointing out what goes on in their heads and without cinematic language interpreting their reality for us. In this understanding, filmmaking is more about giving the audience a chance to observe and learn about the character than about attempting to manipulate the audience into feeling a certain way. Jim Jarmusch states his objective when it comes to his use of the camera and editing: “A moving camera forces the eyes of the viewer to move along with the image, it imprisons your gaze. ... People should observe the characters and the locations and not notice the camera too much. I think the locations say enough by themselves without the camera having to point it out to say: Look here, look there!”<sup>4</sup>

Watching Jim Jarmusch’s films is an exercise in contemplation. We are never told what the character thinks. We simply are in the film reality together. The acting techniques are extremely minimalistic. Jarmusch allows his audience to feel the character through the subtle means of carefully observed behavior and through meaningful composition of his frames. This almost voyeuristic fashion of telling a story is something I am inspired by. However, through making my own film, I realized this subtlety is very hard to achieve. I often had to compromise and make more cuts than I initially envisioned. I tried my best not to violate the audience’s right to form their own opinions.

My hope was that *Call Me Cappy* would exist comfortably within this film history and tradition. The end of my film subtly evokes Charlie Chaplin’s films. In the end of *The Circus*, and almost every other Chaplin picture, the Tramp, after having his heart broken, gets up and walks bravely toward the horizon, ready to meet new challenges, to fall in love one more time, to suffer humiliation, but also to find beauty. In the last shot of my film we see how Wally, whose

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<sup>4</sup> Jim Jarmusch, “Conversation with Jim Jarmusch” by Ralph Eue and Wolfgang Stulenbrock, 1980, in: *Interviews*, edited by Ludvig Hertzberg (University Press of Mississippi, 2001) 7.

dream about the sailboat, and the pretty blond on it, is gone forever, puts on his flippers and courageously walks toward the horizon. The flippers make his walk look funny and resemble the most recognizable walking style in the history of cinema. Even though this film is just a student project, I thought I should let the best of cinema inspire me.

It was never my intention to make *Call Me Cappy* in the style of Jim Jarmusch or Aki Kaurismaki. There was no director I tried to imitate. However, when setting up for certain shots I sometimes heard an echo from specific scenes of these directors' films. We are what we think. And I would say, as directors, we become what we watch. The films we love and deeply connect to become a part of our own language, our own idea about how to express emotions and how to approach filmmaking.

## CHAPTER 5 CERTAIN AMOUNT OF CHARISMA

### CASTING

Choosing the actor for the part of Wally was going to be one of the most important decisions in the entire production. I was aware from the beginning that this decision would hugely impact the success of the film. Together with Andrea and Francesca Caruso, the casting assistant, we went through many rounds of auditions. We searched through every possible Internet source. I reached out to local casting directors and acting coaches.

During the casting sessions, I tried not to look for some preconceived performance I had envisioned in my mind. I mostly relied on my intuition, but at the same time I looked for some specific things, like an actor's ability to listen and to take directions. Being new to the art of conducting a casting session, I used the book by Judith Weston<sup>5</sup> as my guide. I really felt that her casting strategies described in *Directing Actors* were helpful and allowed me to avoid the most obvious mishaps that I see students falling into. I put a lot of effort into stopping myself from talking too much and from giving vague, confusing directions. I used the following approach: I would give an actor a shot at the part. After the first read, I would know whether I wanted to see this actor for one more attempt, or I would just let him or her go, without giving them unnecessary hopes. If I decided I was somewhat interested in the person, I would give him or her one simple playable adjustment and ask for another read. I would talk some more to the actors I was particularly interested in. However, I was in favor of keeping the first round of auditions short.

I ended up with a couple of candidates for the role of Wally. However, no one seemed to be the perfect choice. Even though the character is a timid and rather closed person, the actor had to have a certain level of charisma in order to create an engaging performance that would carry the film. I asked Henry Griffin to put me in touch with the actor who he once suggested for my previous film, Ritchie Montgomery. Henry had an initial feeling that this actor would be perfect for my film. He sent Melissa's script to Ritchie. Soon after that, Ritchie wrote me an email saying that he loved the story, and he was interested in meeting with me. Before we even had a

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<sup>5</sup> Judith Weston, *Directing Actors* (Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City 1996).

chance to set a date, we ran into each other during the premiere of *12 Years a Slave*; I recognized Ritchie from his picture on IMDB. His face was covered with a long beard, since he had just finished filming an episode of *True Detective*, where he played a Cajun fisherman. He had just found out that his role was cut out of Steve McQueen's new film, and I believe it made him a lot more interested in considering the role of Wally, who is the very center of the story.

During our second meeting, we had a chance to chat more. We talked about the character of Wally. I liked Ritchie's understanding of the script and I had an impression I'd get along with him very well on set. I also appreciated his enthusiasm toward the project. I offered him the part that day.

It was a strictly intuitive decision at that point, since I had not been given an opportunity to have Ritchie read for me. I knew I was taking a big risk but, at the same time, I could sense that my candidate possessed a great deal of charisma, which is hard to come across. I loved his look and how animated his face was. Not without some fear, I decided to trust my intuition before I lost his interest.

Casting Ritchie was a groundbreaking step for my film. He inhabited the character immediately. The first few seconds of him reading with the other actors during callbacks proved my instincts right. I had made an excellent decision. There is a childlike quality to Ritchie that gives the character of Wally a sense of truthfulness that translates onto the screen.

Only after my decision to cast Ritchie as Wally could I follow up with the rest of my casting choices. Ronnie Hooks, who ended up inhabiting the part of Gloria, was one of the three actresses invited to callbacks. Each one of them was an interesting candidate. However, I felt that Ronnie had the best chemistry with Ritchie. As Judith Weston says, it is important to cast relationships.<sup>6</sup> I also felt immediately that I could work well with Ronnie. Despite a great deal of experiential difference between her and the more seasoned Ritchie, they made a good match.

Ronnie was cast "against type." Originally, Gloria was a big woman, not attractive, not very mobile. Ronnie on the other hand, is very good-looking and extremely energetic. Ronnie's version of Gloria did not maintain the lazy quality of the original character; I gladly exchanged it for Ronnie's more energetic portrayal. We created a neurotic character that can't stop fidgeting and has troubles focusing on what goes on around her. I think it worked out well and brought fresh layers to the story.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, 238.

Just like Ronnie, who is far from her character in real life, Ritchie has a very different personality than Wally. He is very open and extremely friendly. He is the type of guy who gets to know everyone around him the moment he arrives in a new place. His big personality stands in stark contrast to the very timid Wally. However, as an experienced actor, Ritchie had the ability to portray someone like Wally in a very believable way.

The character of Wally is the center of my film. He is in every single scene, and the camera focuses on his face a lot. It takes a strong presence to get the audience engaged and interested in that face. Richie possesses the ability to capture that interest. For me, as the casting director, it was an important lesson to discover that this charisma and strong screen presence are the most crucial elements in finding the right actor. The audience responds to the amount of energy that comes from the screen. And it doesn't matter if the character is the most shy and timid person they'd ever meet. It should still be played by an actor with strong presence.

Casting for *Call Me Cappy* was a long and often frustrating process, but it finally resulted in choices that I was very pleased with. I feel that the process of casting connects a director to the deepest levels of artistic intuition. During casting, we finally see the characters with human voices and real faces. It is the time when the director encounters the characters as real people. They come to life. The actors can change our original conception of the characters; they force us to drop a lot of our previous assumptions. The characters need to be somewhat reinvented and reconsidered, when the casting process is complete. And casting is also a good opportunity to find out how other people interpret the lines written on the page.

## CHAPTER 6

### LIVING TRUTHFUL UNDER IMAGINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

#### DIRECTING CALL ME CAPPY

Alexander Mackendrick, in his book *On Film Making*, mentions that, for a new filmmaker, approaching a script written by another author is a great step into learning about the directing craft. “It means concentrating solely on exploring the possibilities of film grammar.”<sup>7</sup> On *Call Me Cappy*, I worked with a script that I really felt inspired by and was excited to translate into the visual language of film. Working from Melissa’s story, rather than an original idea of my own, was very liberating. It freed me from constantly worrying about the writing not being good enough, that the dialogue should be tighter, or the ending different. These were all concerns I had with my last short film, *Rosebud*; instead of being able to concentrate completely on directing, once production began, I kept worrying about the screenplay, rewriting scenes throughout the shooting process. At some point, it is important to simply embrace the script for what it is, move on, and search for the truth within the lines. This is far simpler to do when the director is not the primary screenwriter.

#### PREPARATION

It is always difficult to step into the process and get going. I began slowly, taking lots of notes and collecting visual materials on my cork board. After those efforts, I had plenty of images in my head and an overall idea of the film’s look. It was time to structure those ideas and put them down on paper, in order to be able to communicate clearly with my collaborators. The guidelines suggested in the book *Directing Fundamentals* gave me a great start in my preparation for the script breakdown. I had to look at the script in an analytical way and determine what I was working with. I had to express what the spine of my film was. This basically means expressing theme in a way that can be easily communicated to actors. I decided that “to seek for something more in life” would be a good phrase to start with.

Next, I had to determine whose film it was and then look for the protagonist of each

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<sup>7</sup> Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film Making* (Faber and Faber 2004) XXVIII.

scene. I gathered all the information about the characters' psychology that I could find in the script and started brainstorming on how to flesh this psychology out in the film. I made notes on the dynamics of the relationship between Wally and his wife. I focused on determining the characters' "wants," as well as their expectations, and how those wants are expressed through actions in the script. This process gave me a good understanding of the subtext, the true intentions behind the dialogue.

Finally, I divided the entire screenplay into acting beats and dramatic blocks. Even though I rarely went back to those notes later on, I believe this work gave me a clear idea of the dramatic structure of the script. This script knowledge was crucial when it came to creating the shot-list with the Director of Photography, Trenton Mynatt, and staging the scenes. According to Judith Weston, "the purpose of script analysis is to find out who these people (characters) are and what happens to them, to become the teller of their story. Then you...will have an insight and understanding that you can communicate to the actors."<sup>8</sup> Weston's book *Directing Actors*, recommended to me by Laura Medina, became a significant source of knowledge in the directing process and I often referred to it.

For me, the real thrill of directing starts with rehearsals. This is when actors finally feel confident—after all, they got the part—and let themselves venture into new areas while searching for the character. Following the advice from Sidney Lumet's book *Making Movies*,<sup>9</sup> I started with an all-cast meeting during which we read through the entire script. We talked about the story and everyone had the opportunity to ask me questions.

Later, I met with Susan and Emily, the two Bikini Girls from the dream sequence. I had to teach them the choreography of the dance routine that they perform in the dream. Wally and his work-buddy Chuck's only rehearsal took place right after the first table read. The staging for their scenes was minimal. The actor who played Chuck was a natural, whom I basically typecast. Extending the rehearsal past a certain point seemed to start taking him further away from his character. I felt pretty confident about those scenes and decided not to push the actors too much. After that, I focused solely on the scenes between Wally and Gloria. These were the scenes that needed the most work.

Ritchie and I had a common understanding of Wally's character. He's a risk-taking actor

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<sup>8</sup> Judith Weston, Op.Cit.,164

<sup>9</sup> Sidney Lumet, *Making Movies* (New York, Vintage Books, 1995)

and sometimes he would go further that I would want him to. I felt that my main task was to keep him in check, to prevent him from turning Wally into a caricature. Other than that, I would let him do his thing.

I had to put more work into shaping Gloria's performance. Ronnie was very attentive and worked hard to address my directions, but lacked the experience that Richie possesses. Often I would give her independent activities, such as reading a newspaper, and these activities would distract her from her character's real objective. For example, in the laundry room scene, the point of the scene was for Gloria to belittle Wally and his goal of starting swimming lessons. However, I also asked Ronnie to use the activity of fumbling in her purse for a cigarette as an outlet for her character's frustration; unfortunately, the action only came across as mechanical and it hampered rather than enhanced the character's intention. Sometimes, I had to bring her down from turning Gloria into a cartoonish character. However, I find it easier to bring an actor down than to trigger energy that isn't initially there.

All in all, the three of us had great chemistry together and a good understanding. Through "moment by moment" work, we shaped each scene to the point where I felt that the characters were coming to life.

Often, I found it difficult to keep asking my actors for the same thing all over again in different words. It can be frustrating for both actor and director, and it is important to protect actors from feeling that they are delivering a bad performance. Also, there is always the danger of over-complicating their thought process. Too much direction, and too much verbosity, can kill the simplicity and honesty of an actor's performance. "Simple for actors is a short-hand for emotional simplicity, by which is meant emotional honesty."<sup>10</sup> Ironically, simplicity can be the hardest thing to find.

According to Sanford Meisner, acting is "Living truthfully under imaginary circumstances," and Professor Phil Karnell repeatedly emphasized this idea in his courses at UNO. I believe that rehearsing is the process of searching for the truth, finding a real human being within the character. The same principle guides every choice made in the process. The producer, Jon Kilik, in his speech to new filmmakers said: "Keep finding the truth."<sup>11</sup> I believe these words contain the essence of what a director's work is all about.

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<sup>10</sup> Judith Weston, *Op.Cit.*,57

<sup>11</sup> Jon Kilik, in conversation with David Moos, <http://issuu.com/julianschnabelstudio/docs/8.inconversationjuly22/15?e=0> page15.



## SHOOTING

Bringing actors on set is always a test of how well the previous preparation went. Whatever we worked out in the rehearsal room has to be once more adjusted and improved. However, it is very challenging to retain the same focused state of mind once in the midst of the filmmaking havoc. Luckily, on set, I had the comfort of Andrea and Melissa focusing on all the practical problems, leaving me fairly free to work with the actors.

We worked in a set rhythm every time. First was the rehearsal for the actors and the crew. Then, we discussed lighting and camera placement. After Trenton and I had a clear vision of the set-up, I went back to my actors to go over some specific moments of the scene. I tried to stay close by as they got into costume and makeup. Finally, I brought them to set once we were ready for the final rehearsal. After each take, I always approached my actors first, trying to remember all the mental notes I took during their performance. I made sure they felt taken care of and always had a place to rest in between takes, away from the havoc of set work.

I was very humbled by their dedication. There is a scene in the film during which Wally eats spaghetti. Ritchie chose to eat with a rather voracious appetite, which brought a great deal of believability to the character. We ended up doing many takes of this scene and shot it from several angles. I stared feeling really bad for Ritchie, who had consumed enormous amounts of spaghetti, and so I tried to come up with ways to limit the number of shots. Ritchie called me to the side and told me that he didn't want me to worry about anything but the film being the best it possibly could. He assured me he was ready to eat as much spaghetti as needed and did not want me to compromise. "I will throw up if I need to," he said. I was moved by his devotion. I'd be surprised if he ever eats another plate of spaghetti in his life.

For a director, there is always a tension between being unsure and allowing yourself to take time to think on set and giving the crew a solid sense of confidence that you know exactly what you're doing. The Polish director, Agnieszka Holland, told me to be self-confident and act as if I knew what to do even if I didn't. However, sometimes I need to wait for my intuition to catch up with me. Other times, I feel I went the wrong way and I have to go back to start over, which makes me look unprofessional for giving the wrong direction to the actors or crew. However, I always choose the "gut feeling" over the danger of appearing uncertain.

Being a director is a great challenge for one's personality. It takes a lot of interpersonal skills, a sense of diplomacy, and the ability to make everyone feel appreciated. The atmosphere on set hugely depends on the director's personality. I believe everyone does better work if the atmosphere is not tense. But at the same time, this might lead to trouble keeping order on set. Good thing I had Andrea for that. She would tell people in the most polite way, yet with clarity, to do their job.

The way I see my role as a director is as a creative funnel, someone who draws together many talented people and focuses their efforts on a common goal. I'm honored to be the person who unites so many artists towards a single cause. My most important task is to be aware of the theme and to ensure that all departments on set are working towards expressing that theme.

## CHAPTER 7 THE LOOK OF THE FILM

### CINEMATOGRAPHY AND PRODUCTION DESIGN

Deciding on a visual strategy for the film was extremely important; this decision would have a major impact on the project's overall style. A hand-held look would make for a completely different film than one with locked-off, specific shots. For me, coming up with a visual approach to cinematography in *Call Me Cappy* wasn't really even a choice. Perhaps more than any other production decision, cinematography is determined by the director's way of seeing the world in everyday life. Cinematography is inseparable from how our imagination works and from what type of stories we want to tell. I believe that cinematographic choices emerge naturally from the director's understanding of the script. When brainstorming ideas for the shot list, I simply followed my instincts about the story.

I don't believe in using cinematic tools if their use is not motivated by a desire to further the story. If the camera moves, there must be a concrete reason; for example, maybe this movement allows for tracking Wally's character. If we look at Wally from any angle other than eye-level, this will necessarily be an attempt to communicate something about him on a psychological level. I would never move the camera simply because the shot might "look good." Trying to make the camera an utterly organic element of the storytelling was my primary goal.

### PREPARATION

Over several meetings, Trenton Mynatt, my Director of Photography, and I shared ideas, and I made sure he understood my visual sensibility. I had many titles in mind when I gathered images for the film's look. My main inspiration was the Norwegian film *O'Horten* by Bent Hamer, for both cinematography and production design. I used shots from this film to communicate with both Trenton and Margaret Broach, my production designer, and I asked them both to watch the film. Trenton pulled stills from almost every scene, which we used as references in our work as we created the shot list.

The shot list that Trenton and I created changed considerably, but it remained a useful blueprint throughout production. First, we both agreed that there would be no hand-held shots in

the film. Then, we discussed each scene in terms of its dramatic structure and considered what would be the most natural and organic way to approach it. The shot list we developed ended up having a very simple structure and a rather old-fashioned approach to cinematography. We always had a master shot, followed by close-ups and inserts. The character's point of view played an important part. On set, the shot list became a very fluid document. Both Trenton and I came up with new solutions while dealing with the actual space and actors. It was a creative process with a lot of improvisation, yet it was good to have the list so well prepared, as it gave us something to fall back on if new solutions did not work.

For the production design, I suggested several films for Margaret to use as inspiration. First, she implemented many of the color patterns present in *O'Horten*. I have always found the Norwegian film very appealing in its visual style, and I admire the fact that there is an organic connection between each element of its visual language and the story. Henry Griffin, aware of my cinematic taste, gave me a DVD of this film. The unity of vision in the film inspired me, and encouraged me to focus on the color scheme, costumes, and other stylistic choices. *Napoleon Dynamite* was the second film we used as inspiration for our set design and use of color. I thought the film had a great visual sense of the American Midwest, and so we used it as a guide in creating the world of our film.

Margaret and I always started with discussing the character. Our goal was to depict Wally's journey in a visual way, as well as to create a believable reality for him to inhabit. His world tells us about who he is. Therefore, the change of his surroundings as the story progresses reflects his transformation as a person. A lot of effort was put into creating the living room that Wally and Gloria occupy. We managed to find a perfect location, a house from the seventies that had a very distinctive Midwestern look. Thanks to the budget available to me, we were able to redecorate the place considerably, in such a way as to further the story. The drab, de-saturated décor underscores how Wally and Gloria's lives are dominated by a mundane routine of *Wheel of Fortune* and TV dinners. The television is presented as being the very center of the characters' life, figuratively and literally. The living room became a place of restricted movement, and also restricted dreams.

The costumes in the film served the same purpose as production design; they reflected and emphasized the characters' personalities. Thanks to the scholarship I received, I was able to let my imagination loose and consider a wide variety of wardrobe options; I didn't need to settle

for inexpensive or local options.

I ordered the waitress uniform for Gloria from Israel on Etsy.com. It was especially made for Ronnie. I believe that the old-fashioned diner outfit fit her character perfectly. It not only made her occupation clear to the audience but also positioned her character comfortably in the old-fashioned reality of the film. Moreover, the fact that she wears it at home tells us something about her relationship with Wally.

I ordered vintage mermaid bikinis from a local fashion designer Alicia Zenobia. This allowed me to add layers to the meaning of the dream sequence. Mermaids have a symbolic significance in our culture, to be found in works such as Homer's *The Odyssey*. Mermaids suggest that the dream is possibly malevolent: an illusion or a trap.

Coming up with a visual approach for the dream sequence was a serious challenge. We were able to experiment with the design a lot, and my vision of these scenes evolved significantly throughout the process. In our first rehearsal, the sequence took place in front of a green screen, where we later added images of the sea. This technique did not result in the desired "Hollywood of the 50s look" I originally imagined. We kept experimenting, and eventually I decided to shoot in the sound stage and make the whole scene far more abstract. The nautical atmosphere was mostly created by the use of light (film lights, disco balls, and Christmas lights) and by the use of sound cues.

## THE OUTCOME

Despite all of our pre-production and pre-visualizing work, it was still a challenge to turn our ideas and plans into reality on set. Being focused on working with the actors, I did not have the ability to control the camera and lighting as much as I had hoped. I remember moments where I felt that a shot was not ideal, but, at the same time, I felt lost when it came to suggesting a solution. At other times, I realized that elements of our design looked very different than I assumed they would. However, all together, I was pleased with the work done in this department, and many of the elements that did not look quite right we were able to correct in the postproduction stage.

I was very happy with the other locations we booked and how we "dressed" them. These locations provided a lot of production value we didn't have to work for. The Laundromat, bingo

hall, and bowling alley brought not only great production value but also heightened the level of believability. The only drawback was that we had less control over the lighting.

In general, lighting was a very challenging aspect of making *Call Me Cappy*. Dutch cinematographer, Robby Müller, who shot some of my favorite films, emphasized the importance of lighting in order to create a mood.<sup>12</sup> I feel that in my thesis we only fully succeeded with this in the dream sequence and with the sunset shot on the beach that closes the film. We had very little control over the lighting at the bingo hall, the pool, and the bowling alley. We simply had to go with what was already available.

I feel like student filmmakers are often afraid of under-lighting because it might look unprofessional. This can result in scenes lit more like a TV show than a movie. In my future projects, I would like to focus on this aspect more and attempt to achieve better unity between what the character goes through and the feel the light evokes. I'm afraid I lacked creativity in this regard with *Call Me Cappy*.

There is a lot that I would improve about the final look of the film. I have not come close to the refined style of *O'Horten* and other films I used as my inspiration. I had to limit the use of long shots in the final project. Later, in the editing room, I had to cut to close-ups more often I initially envisioned. However, at the same time, *Call Me Cappy* is a big achievement when I compare it with my previous film, *Rosebud*. I know that, along with my collaborators, we put a lot of thought and work into developing a unified vision. I learned a lot from them and I'm grateful for their input. In the end, the visual language of the film does support the story I set out to tell.

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<sup>12</sup> The Interview with Robby Muller enclosed as a part of the bonus material on: Down By Law, Criterion Collection

## CHAPTER 8

### FINDING THE MIDWEST IN THE MIDDLE OF LOUISIANA

#### LOCATIONS AND EXTRAS

When I decided to make Melissa's story about a bowling alley worker from a small town in Nebraska into a movie, I was faced with the challenge of filming a story that takes place in the Midwest in Louisiana. When I traveled from Florida to Oregon a few years ago, I saw how all the small towns looked very much alike—no matter if it was Colorado, Oklahoma or Idaho. Just like in Jim Jarmusch's *Broken Flowers*, where you can never tell where Bill Murray visits, I tried to give *Call Me Cappy* that same ambiguous setting of "somewhere in the United States." Essentially, we never say where it is that the characters live. I love that feeling of non-descript locations—suggesting that everywhere is pretty much the same.

However, Louisiana has a very particular landscape and vegetation, different than the Midwest. We dealt with this by having most scenes take place inside: the house, the bowling alley, the municipal pool, and Laundromat. Melissa did a fantastic job trying to tailor the script so it could be filmed locally. We realized that houses in the Westbank or Metairie could easily serve as a Midwestern neighborhood. Bingo parlors and small town bowling alleys are similar everywhere.

Finding those locations was one of the biggest challenges in the production, but, at the same time, it was a great adventure. As I started to venture into the world of bingo halls and bowling alleys, I entered a Louisiana I hadn't known before. Either my husband or Melissa accompanied me on my excursions through the small towns of Louisiana, in search of locations. One evening, Melissa and I visited all the bingo halls in the Metairie and Kenner area. Those places, filled with cigarette smoke and crowds of players, have an absolutely extraordinary atmosphere.

Everywhere we went we experienced a very enthusiastic welcome from the owners; they were happy to let us film in their establishments. Melissa and I were worried that, since gambling was involved at these bingo halls, people wouldn't want us to film there. Instead, the owners said that they'd like to give their regular customers the opportunity to be visible in the scene. We decided on Bingo Palace on Airline Highway (Lions Club Bingo). The manager, Mr. Caruso, agreed immediately, after he heard about the project. He said: "Yes, we'll do that." Without

asking any questions, or bringing up money, we were allowed to film during their busiest day.

We brought our actors and had them sit among the regular bingo players. This brought an amazing level of reality to the film, the kind of realism that I always loved about Polish and Czech cinema, in particular, where the camera was able to pick up all kinds of fascinating-looking faces in the crowd. By using the regular bingo attendees, we were able to show average working-class people, instead of an artificial crowd of extras recruited by some casting agency. I've always wondered why it is so hard to find those fascinating faces of people, who have stories written in their eyes, in American cinema. But then I found them in Milos Forman's American movies, like *Takeing Off*. It's just a matter of finding the right people for the scene. I think the right crowd brings a movie to a new level. I'm really happy about how the scenes turned out in the bingo hall, thanks to the presence of the actual bingo players. We made sure that the dialogue shots were finished before these players arrived, thereby avoiding sound issues.

When looking for the bowling alley, we visited many different places only to realize that it was virtually impossible to get a place for free and to ourselves. We would have to pay a lot and shoot during night hours, which would make it even harder to get extras to show up. Finally, one evening, after driving through small towns of southern Louisiana, my husband and I arrived in Houma at a small family-run bowling alley (Bowl South). We were pretty discouraged after visiting all the huge bowling alleys in Baton Rouge, none of which were suitable for the project. And then we drove for another two hours, on tiny dark roads, to get to Houma and see the one last bowling alley from our list.

I immediately loved the look of the place. It was very "vintage," old-fashioned and more about the actual bowling and not so much the flashy screens. It didn't have the chain bowling alley look at all; it was really unique. The owner, Marie Lirette, came to talk to us. As soon as I told her briefly about the project she agreed to let us film there. She loved the story of *Call Me Cappy* and really wanted to be a part of the film. There is a huge bowling culture in Houma, including several professional leagues, and all those people were excited to be in our film. A lot of people showed up the day of shoot and worked with us like they were part of the production team. It was an instance of great collaboration between the people of Houma and UNO film students.

We were also really lucky with the pool scene. The UNO Arena pool manager, Janise Roth, immediately agreed to help us out. We used the pool for free and my second AD, Tyler



Laperouse, populated the pool with the many extras that we reached through Craigslist and the Holding Tent website.

While searching for Wally's world in Louisiana, I found myself in places I never knew existed and would probably never have gone to otherwise. It was a very interesting experience to leave my house and within just 20 minutes find myself visiting all the bingo parlors and bowling alleys in the area, talking to the owners, and observing people captivated by the game. That was a "new Louisiana" for me, and a really fun experience.

## CHAPTER 9 RE-WRITING “CALL ME CAPPY”

### EDITING

“The last draft of the script is the first cut of the film. The final cut of the film is the last draft of the script.”<sup>13</sup> Quentin Tarantino

In the case of *Call Me Cappy*, the editing process became a major rewrite of the script. After I put together the first cut, which closely followed the script, the film was about 32 minutes in duration. This felt significantly too long. I was aware of that right away. However, it wasn't as easy to figure out which scenes should go. It is a very difficult process to start letting go of entire scenes; directors are not the best people for that job. It is virtually impossible to look at the cut objectively and decide to get rid of whole scenes that took so much effort to create, and that had seemed to be an organic art of the story. The process of editing is very much about getting over the attachments to the work and to certain moments on the screen.

I knew I needed an outside person for a second, more drastic cut. It had to be someone who wasn't on set and who would look at the material with a fresh eye. Someone who would judge the cut for what it is and someone whose judgment I trust. I am fortunate that my best friend, Anna Dobrowodzka, is an editor. She's worked with me on every previous project of mine. She was the obvious choice to take on the role of “independent judge” and take a pass at the material.

She cut it to 15 minutes and sent me her work. The story made sense in this new shape and made me realize that *Call Me Cappy* really works a lot better as a shorter film. However, the cut was far from what I envisioned. After we talked, Anna took another pass at cutting it. This new cut had some good ideas; however, it felt very choppy and the tracking of the main character was lost. After her second pass at the film, I took over the editing and for the next two months worked on shaping the scenes.

I feel that Anna's input was a major contribution to the project, and I decided to give her a credit as a co-editor, since I wouldn't have been able to cut down the first cut by a half myself.

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<sup>13</sup> Quentin Tarantino, the documentary film *Cutting Edge. The Magic of Movie Editing* 2004.

This was a major step in the process of telling the story and it hugely determined the final outcome. She saw the potential for a 15-minute long movie in what was initially a half-hour long film. And she was right. She gave me the right direction to go and I took over from there. Editing was a big challenge for me and I am glad I took it on, but I'm also glad that Anna was there to support me in the beginning.

Once I sat in the editing room, I felt kind of terrified and unsure of whether I could create a solid cut; there were gaps in the current story that I didn't see solutions for. After weeks of struggling with the dramatic structure of the film, the middle of which just seemed "dead," I finally had an epiphany. An idea for a new, very short scene came to my mind. I realized that the material was lacking a scene that would connect the dispute Wally had in the garage with his wife and the second dream sequence. I decided to schedule re-shoots for a new scene that would take place at the pool. It was an easy thing to organize. The location was on campus, the actor was available, and we did not need any school equipment (underwater footage is shot on a Canon camera with the use of an underwater case I purchased). The moment I figured out that I needed this short addition to my cut, things started to click again. After the scene was added, I had a feeling that the cut was getting there, for the first time.

I showed the film to many different people. One time, a group of friends from Florida stayed at my house. They had never heard the story of *Call Me Cappy* before I asked them to watch the film. Observing the reactions of this test audience was a great help. Later, I asked them specific questions. It was helpful for me as an editor to get this type of feedback. I repeated this test with other groups of people.

The last scene of the film was the one that caused the most confusion. About 80% of the people thought the movie ended with Wally fulfilling his goal and being in a better place in life. The remaining 20% read the last moments of the film in a more pessimistic way. They thought Wally swam toward the horizon to meet his death. It's interesting to me that there are such different responses to my film. I was pleased to discover this. As I mentioned earlier, I wanted the film to end like an open book. I like the idea of the audience deciding for themselves how the story ends.

In the last stage of editing, I asked Danny Retz for his input. He sat with me for three whole days and helped to smooth out the cuts, and he suggested better solutions to certain moments of the film. He also really helped me with transitions from scene to scene, which

resulted in a better flow for the whole film. After my project received this support from Danny, I was ready to lock the picture. I felt that I reached the point where I could not see any more opportunities for further improvement.

A film journalist whom I admire, Tadeusz Sobolewski says: “A good film tells itself like a poem.”<sup>14</sup> I believe these words express how a good cut should feel, as well. A successful edit is very much about timing, about letting certain moments last. I don’t know if I reached this goal in *Call Me Cappy*. The film rushes through some scenes really fast. However, considering all the material I shot, I did the best I could. It was a fascinating process to discover how to tell Wally’s story in the best possible way, to keep finding the truth in the material I shot. At the same time, it was the most frustrating stage of the process, since the shots on the screen are final. The editing process was a lot about saving the material and dealing with everything that did not go as well as planned. A lot of scenes did not make it into the cut and some other scenes were shortened significantly. In the end, I must admit, I learned a lot during the editing process. It was a great lesson in the difference between the attempt and the outcome.

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<sup>14</sup> T.Sobolowski, *Zbyt Duzy Blask* (Znak Press, Krakow 2004) 59.

## CHAPTER 10 ORCHESTRATING WALLY'S JOURNEY

### CREATING THE SCORE

My initial concept for the film was not to have any score until the credits. I did not want to introduce any sounds that wouldn't belong to the story world. However, the concept changed; the style of the film is fairly impressionistic and some scenes simply asked for a score. I decided to give it a try.

My husband, Rainer Holzinger, had been my main collaborator when it came to music on all my previous projects, and we collaborated this time, as well. After he watched the cut of my film, he started thinking about the music. He recorded demo versions of two songs: one for the scene of Wally travelling and one for the credits. After experimenting with some other ideas, I decided to use the demo compositions and we went into the recording stage. For the credits I decided to use the low-quality demo version, instead of the clean track from the studio, but I was fine with sacrificing the sound quality for a more appropriate mood.

I was very happy with the songs he composed for the credits and for Wally's road trip. However, his style did not work as well for the dream sequence. We kept trying different approaches to score that sequence by using different instruments like the ukulele, the piano, and the organ. Nothing seemed to capture the dreamy atmosphere that I wanted. The music just ended up sounding creepy, more like something you would encounter in a dream sequence from David Lynch's *Twin Peaks*. I kept trying to come up with a solution and almost gave up on having a score in those parts of the film.

Then, I thought about the harpist who often practiced outside the UNO PAC building. Harp is an extremely versatile instrument that can create wonderful mood and ambient music. It also has the dream-like quality I needed. I went to the music department office and inquired about the harpist, who had just graduated from the UNO Music Program. Ivory McCann called me back within a day and we set up a meeting. She watched the film and expressed great interest in collaborating with me on the project.

When we met for the first time, we just focused on searching for the scales and tones on the harp that would reflect the right mood. I have no musical education, which necessitates that my communication with the composer happen on an abstract level. What I described in terms of

mood, images, and colors she would translate into sound. For example, I would ask her to search for a sense of closure, things coming together in life, or the sounds that would underscore the warmth of the sunset. I asked her to listen to a couple of songs to point out the mood I was looking for. “She’s Leaving Home” by the Beatles, which starts with a melodic harp line, was one of them. I also mentioned “Sunday Morning” by Velvet Underground, which has a soothing melody played on glockenspiel. I’m not sure how much those examples really impacted Ivory, if at all. Yet, in the end she came up with a melody that really works for the film. I believe that the harp music elevates the scenes to a new level. I see this collaboration as an important step in my artistic education and my ability to communicate with other artists. I was very pleased with the results of her work and happy that we found a common understanding.

All the music for the film was recorded at the practice space that my husband’s band shares with a group of rappers. The equipment is already set up to facilitate music recording. I was very fortunate that the music engineer for the rap group, Jonny Beatz, expressed interest in my project and basically joined our team. His goal was to branch out and record types of music other than rap and hip-hop, and I needed a score for the film. Therefore, our goals coincided.

The song that is sung by one of the Bikini Girls, in the first dream sequence, was composed and recorded by Susan Gordon, the actress in the film. She brought the song to me a few weeks before we shot and I immediately approved of it.

I feel happy that I managed to combine so many peoples’ talents to come together in one project. The process of obtaining the score for my film changed my sensitivity to music. I believe that by having to make so many musical choices I became a much more conscious listener, and I was forced to sharpen my intuition. It was a fascinating adventure and a whole new experience.

## CHAPTER 11 FINALIZING THE PICTURE

### POST-PRODUCTION SOUND AND COLOR CORRECTION

“There are only two people in the world who know how to use sound in film. Me and Kubrick,”<sup>15</sup> said Roman Polanski, not known for being humble. I’m sure many would disagree. But, not thrown off by his arrogance, I paid attention to how he used sound in his films, while revisiting all his works. Polanski has a good sense of where his audience is at any point in the story. He is a great manipulator and can create tension with the same skill as Hitchcock. He uses reappearing sound cues that the audience unconsciously grows accustomed to. I believe that tracking his use of sound design in film helped me better understand the importance of sounds in films.

I started to realize what a huge role it can play in the final experience of the film, when used correctly. I was aware of the fact that creative and professional sound design could elevate my film to a new level, and cover for some weak points that occurred in other areas. Melissa agreed with me. She said that, after so much good luck and support, we should make sure that the film finishes strongly.

We decided to ask Jon Vogl, of Apex Sound, one of the best sound editors in town, to consider working on the project. Laura Medina introduced me to him over a school field trip she organized. She also suggested he might take on this job for a special price. He indeed gave me a great deal.

The ability to work with Jon was an amazing opportunity for a beginning filmmaker like me. Through the process, I learned a lot about sound. I wasn’t aware of the workload involved with cleaning up sound, even for a short film like mine. All the dialogue was cleaned and Jon re-recorded (ADR) a few lines. New sound effects were added, which made the film world come to life. The effects also enhanced the story. I believe that Jon’s work has really elevated my film to a higher level.

Through the process of color correction, the film improved further. DP Trenton Mynatt corrected the colors himself. After he dealt with increasing the contrast, he consulted me about

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<sup>15</sup> Quoting after: Jacek Szczerba, Gazeta Wyborcza:  
[http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,7114095,Spieprzaj\\_do\\_Hollywood\\_.html#TRrelSST](http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,7114095,Spieprzaj_do_Hollywood_.html#TRrelSST)

the color choices. Together, we worked on the colors to depict the difference between Wally's life with Gloria and the new reality he enters (pool, dream, beach). The process of color correcting was a fascinating lesson and made me far more aware of color. It was interesting to see how each choice at this stage really influenced the mood and feel of each scene.

In my mind, the final product would have the soft look of film, even though we used RED Epic digital camera. I thought, we might be able to achieve the "film look" through manipulating the colors. But that road led nowhere. Unfortunately, this look just wasn't possible to achieve. I had to accept the "digital look" of my film, where colors feel artificially saturated. However, at the same time, I was pleased to see the huge improvement of the film that was accomplished during this stage.



## CHAPTER 12 FIRST ATTEMPT TO JUDGE THE WORK

### THE ANALYSIS OF *CALL ME CAPPY*

Two months have passed since I finalized the process of making *Call Me Cappy*. I wrote all of the above chapters immediately after completing the film. In fact, the last final improvements were still being done to the project as I was wrapping up the paper. I'm less than three weeks from the planned thesis defense, and it's time to finalize this essay.

I wasn't able to write this concluding chapter any sooner. When the project is still in production, it is important to maintain creative involvement, enthusiasm and energy. In order to write this conclusion, I had to distance myself somewhat and finally look at the film in a critical way, evaluate what worked and what did not. I showed *Call Me Cappy* to several small audiences of friends and family; so far, it has been accepted into one festival. I'm curious to watch it in a big theater with a large audience, and this will happen one week from today. Now I can look at this film as just another viewer. There are lots of things I enjoy about the film and many that disappoint me. I'll start with the aspects that I am pleased with.

I connect to the character of Wally. I believe the decision to cast Ritchie Montgomery was one of the best decisions I made during the entire production. His look and natural demeanor are convincing. His childlike quality evokes an innocence that is so inherent to the character. Ritchie's acting makes me feel for Wally. I'm glad I trusted my intuition and decided to cast Ritchie on the day we met. I am grateful Henry Griffin put me in touch with this wonderful actor. Working with Ritchie was a great experience that enriched me as a director and as a person. His devotion on set was very gratifying. I believe we had a very fruitful collaboration, and I'm really happy with the performance.

I enjoy seeing all the locations we found in different parts of Louisiana. I think they created a concise story world for the film. I believe all the places Wally visits come together as one reality and bring an effective level of verisimilitude to the film. They each have their own feel that enriches the story. Creating the Midwestern feel in this Louisiana-based production was a challenge, and it worked out to my satisfaction.

I truly believe in venturing out to real life spaces and searching for inspiration in these existing surroundings. This approach brings more character to the film than re-created interiors,

where every aspect is under control. This, of course, depends on the project, but for the one I was working on, it worked out well. I simply love the idea of bringing to the screen locations that exist somewhere on the margins of cities and towns; places that are known only to certain groups of people.

I am pleased with the sound and music work in the film. It was a big decision to have a professional sound designer do this work, since it involved a decent part of the budget. I think it was the right choice. The problems with other aspects of the film can seem a lot more jarring if the sound is also poor. I am also really happy about the collaboration with Ivory McCann, the harpist. It was a new experience for me to work with a composer. I believe the harp music enhanced the mood of the dream scenes, and it brought a new layer to the closing scene in which the harp motif evokes the dream drifting away.

The last scene is the only scene I'm actually thrilled with. I planned it in great detail and it worked out as I intended. There were external factors that I was lucky with: the weather and a beautiful sunset. I found the perfect sailboat and an experienced captain who could sail it very close to the shore. This was a fairly easy shoot with just a few people on the crew. There wasn't much distraction. I could be close to the actor and to the camera. It is the only scene in the film that allows the character to just exist in a moment. It's not rushed. Besides, the visuals of this scene are aesthetically pleasing.

I believe the large scale of the project was the biggest problem in this production. First of all, I feel that my directing skill was not yet at a high enough level to carry such a complex project as *Call Me Cappy*. The organizing part of this film took up too much oxygen and took time away from planning how to shoot each scene. Besides, I have not had nearly enough training as a director to carry a project of this scale. Therefore, there are many aspects of this film I am not satisfied with and entire scenes I wish I had staged differently.

The main thing I realized, once I watched the film with a new audience, was how rushed some scenes feel. I did not realize this in the editing room because I knew the material so well. The audience will probably miss much of the information that seems obvious to me. The scenes feel short and the characters do not get a chance to simply "be" on the screen. All the films I mentioned as my inspiration have the characters truly occupy the screen. The directors really let them live their lives in the film. The scenes in these great films are all structured in such a way that each one of them could be a short film. A scene should be an entity all its own, with a

beginning, middle, and end. I wasn't able to achieve that in my project. My scenes are short and impressionistic. They don't really bite into the reality of the story. Due to many different problems with framing, and the blocking of scenes, many moments got lost and did not play out on the screen as I intended. This is probably the biggest of my disappointments.

One other problem I noticed with my film, pretty early on, was that some of my actors were not as strong as others. It became very obvious in the editing room that there is a significant difference in experience between the performers. I had to work around some of the performances, and often there was nothing I could do but shorten the scenes.

I am also disappointed with the visual approach I took toward designing this film. I believe my film is shot and lit "correctly," but without much artistic risk or originality. One thing I would certainly do differently would be the shot list. I would like the shots to be even more involved with the characters' psychology. Also, I regret not having focused on more visual details that could enrich the story and bring us closer to Wally's world.

All together, this was a very challenging project in many ways. Besides its scale (many different location and many extras to manage), there was also the challenge of telling a story of a man who does not really connect to anyone. Wally is a loner and stays this way until the end. The scenes show him interact with people, but there are no close relations in his life. It is not easy to show such characters in a dramatic way.

In terms of story, the dramatic tension was also difficult to create. We find out very early in the script about Wally's goal and about the main obstacle. After that, there is not a whole lot to anticipate. The dramatic structure is more or less flat, until the second turning point, where Wally decides to go on a road trip. Given a chance to improve this film, I would rewrite the beginning. I believe it would be more engaging if the viewer slowly discovered Wally's obsession with the ocean and the reason for it.

All in all, I feel that the biggest success of this project is the fact that, along with my producers and everyone involved, we pulled it off. We made it happen and learned a lot along the way. The film has its problems, but we never assumed it was going to be perfect. Creating this project was the most challenging task I have undertaken so far as a filmmaker. From the beginning to the end, it was a long, satisfying journey and I am very happy that this film became a part of my life. It was, most of all, a valuable learning experience.

## CHAPTER 13

### CONCLUSION

Apart from all the technical problems of the film, the most important question is whether *Call Me Cappy* adequately expressed the theme I was hoping to present. The audience will ultimately be the judge. In my personal opinion, the character of Wally did capture the essence of my theme in his journey from his “lazy boy” armchair to the open sea. I think that Ritchie’s performance does take the viewer on a journey with Wally. However, I’m a little worried that this journey happened too abruptly and could be lost to some of the audience. Having a chance to prepare and shoot this film one more time, I would do a lot of things differently.

However, for the time being, I did the best I could. For me personally, *Call Me Cappy* was a fascinating journey to my own “open sea.” I ventured into new areas and learned a lot about the craft and about myself. The most satisfying part of the process has been the incredible amount of collaboration that was instigated by this project. I met a lot of wonderful people and started new friendships.

As I mentioned earlier, we make movies for ourselves, to see who we are and to learn about ourselves. Just like Wally’s trip to the ocean, making a movie is a huge adventure on the path of self-discovery. We don’t know what lives in our heads until we get it out. Creating a project and collaborating with talented people is, in my opinion, a wonderful way of getting it out.

After completing *Call Me Cappy*, I see myself on a new road in my life. In this way, the theme of the film directly relates to my personal experience. Making the film made me discover new things about myself and about my plans for the future. Wally and I are on the same boat. I don’t know what happens with Wally after the end of the film, but that is not the most important thing. I believe the journey is the biggest reward and, for me, creating *Call Me Cappy* was an amazing journey. It was also an opportunity to put all the knowledge I have gathered so far about filmmaking into practice and to access myself as a director. Creating a piece of art becomes a mirror in which the creator can look at herself. The film made me realize I have a long way to go in learning my craft. I am also aware there is not a set path for directors to follow after school. My adventure with The University of New Orleans ends with uncertainty, like an open book, but

at least this film will remain to tell the story of the last three years.

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Call Me Cappy

Revision 1

By

Melissa Remark

Thesis script  
Maja Holzinger  
mmholzin@uno.edu  
FTCA

12/09/2013  
Final draft



INT. KITCHEN - DAYA FREEZER DOOR OPENS. A HAND REACHES INSIDE.

1

Freezer door opens. A hand reaches inside and grabs a box.

A TV Dinner box is ripped open and the packaging comes off with a crinkle.

The microwave time is set to 2:00 and the hum of cooking follows. The green digital numbers count down.

WALLY MACDONALD, late 50s, tired, average looking, out of shape but not overweight, stands at the counter waiting and staring out of the window.

The front door opens and closes. His wife, GLORIA, calls from off screen.

GLORIA (O.S.)  
Hey. I'm home. Wall? Put in a  
Hungry man with Mac and Cheese.

Wally turns his head toward the direction the voice comes from.

WALLY  
What?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

2

It's clean enough but dismal, filled with the type of random knickknacks from dollar stores. There is a clock open in half sitting on the dining table (unfinished repairing project)

\*  
\*  
\*

Gloria, 50ish with dyed-red hair, large breasted with a spare tire around her stomach and lots of make up, counts tips and places them in a jar with a brochure for Mesa Vista taped to it. She wears a diner-type waitress uniform with a name tag.

Wally stops at the door.

WALLY  
What'd you say?

GLORIA  
(annunciating)  
Hungry Man with Mac and Cheese,  
please.

Wally heads back to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

3

The microwave dings at his arrival.

He opens the freezer and searches inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

4

Wally enters the living room fast with a steaming plastic TV dinner container in his hands. It burns his fingers as he takes a seat on the Lazy-Boy.

On the other lazy boy, Gloria takes off her shoes, massages her feet and keeps squinting at the TV. \*

GLORIA

Mont...vid-o. Shit, I have no clue.  
Buy another vowel.

Wally blows on his pasta and takes a bite burning his mouth. He gets a bit of tomato sauce on his cheek.

The microwave dings in the kitchen. Gloria gives Wally an eye, sighs, and then gets up to get it herself. As she rushes not to miss much of the show, she accidentally

PUSHES A STACK OF MAIL

with her hip and it spreads across the coffee table.

Wally notices a SHINY POSTCARD sticking out.

CONTESTANT ON TV (O.S.)

I'd like to solve, Pat. Montevideo,  
Uruguay.

Grabbing the postcard from the Lazy-Boy, Wally reads the cover to himself. It says:

*"Congratulations! You have won a tropical Caribbean cruise on your very own yacht!"*

There is a glossy picture of a man wearing a sailing cap and a woman in red bikini sailing into a tropical port.

Gloria returns with her TV dinner in the same way as Wally.

GLORIA

What was it? Montevideo? Never  
heard of it.

Gloria pronounces it wrong. Wally drinks his beer in a koozi.

(CONTINUED)

WALLY

When did this come? Says we won a  
cruise, Glo.

He holds the postcard up. She ignores him.

He turns it over. In a different generic font, it's  
addressed to him from Wonderworks, Inc.

WALLY

Shit. It says I won a cruise.

He pitches it over to Gloria. She huffs at him and looks at  
it quickly.

GLORIA

(chucking it back)  
Ain't nothing but a scam.

WALLY

Maybe. (Licks teeth) Maybe not.

Wally sets the postcard on the edge of his TV tray and takes  
another bite staring at the white sailboat in the picture.

INT. NORTH PLATTE BOWLING ALLEY - DAY

5

A bowl rolls down the ail and knocks down all the pins.  
Happy bowler rises his arms.

Wally walks by. He wears a bowling shirt with a MANAGER  
pin. He picks up empty glasses from tables on his way to the  
counter where

CHUCK, 40ish, local playboy past his prime, stands staring  
off at the lanes.

CHUCK

Wally, check it out.

Wally follows Chuck's gaze to where two TEEN GIRLS are  
bowling and obviously flirting.

CHUCK (CONTD)

I think they're on a date.

Wally and Chuck watch for moment...

One of the girls throws the bowling ball granny-style down  
the lane and they laugh. The other holds her hips from  
behind as they watch the ball roll slowly to the pins.

(CONTINUED)

WALLY

No shit?

CHUCK

Yeah. I'm waiting for them to kiss.

WALLY

I ain't seen nothing like that  
before...

CHUCK

(elbowing Wally)

In real life, bro.

A noise of broken beer glass at some table snaps Wally out.

WALLY

Hey, you ever seen the ocean?

CHUCK

Nope.

WALLY

Me neither.

Wally watches the girls for a second and then leaves to clean the mess while Chuck keeps staring.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

6

Wally dressed in yellow boxers and a wife-beater shirt stands bare foot in the kitchen.

He holds the phone in one hand and the POSTCARD in another. He listens to the menu.

He presses 1.

While pressing the phone against his shoulder, Wally shakes everything out of a pink fake-leather purse (Gloria's powder, lipstick, stack of papers and other stuff).

We hear the Wonderworks phone operator on the loud speaker:

WONDERWORKS VOICE

Please enter your credit card  
number.

Wally impatiently shuffles through Gloria's stuff in search for the card. He finally finds it and starts pressing buttons on the phone.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

7

Voice Over of the phone operator continues.

WONDERWORKS VOICE

Please press 1 to confirm...  
Congratulations! Check your mail -  
you'll be receiving your prize  
certification soon!

Gloria sleeps, breathing heavily into a sleep apnea machine.

Wally tiptoes into the bedroom with Gloria's purse. He gently sets the purse on a chair next to Gloria and tiptoes to his side where he gets into bed.

On the nightstand, he sets the POSTCARD against the lamp and switches it off.

Then, he turns his head to look at the ceiling and closes his eyes...

The WHIR OF GLORIA'S APNEA MACHINE turns into the SOUND OF WAVES lapping against a shore...

EXT. SAILBOAT - DAY

8

Water splashes against the hull of a boat.

Wally lounges, eyes closed, his face lit by the butterfly sun. Seagulls squawk.

He opens his eyes to see the sea sparkling like a disco ball.

He squints. A figure comes into view.. just a shadow at first blocking the sun... then, as he focuses, it's

A YOUNG WOMAN in a red bikini.

She has pretty long hair blowing in the wind.

BIKINI GIRL

Where to next, Captain?

She cracks open a can of beer in a koozi and hands it to him.

WALLY

Call me Cappy, Miss.

The light of the sun glinting off the ocean blinds him. He lifts his hand to cover his face.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

9

Wally and Gloria shove dirty laundry into washing machines. Gloria pours detergent. Wally drops quarters into the slots.

WALLY

Do I have swim trunks?

GLORIA

What for now?

They sit. Gloria picks up a magazine.

WALLY

I told you. Swimming lessons at the Y.

GLORIA

You don't even know where the Y is. What do you want to do that for?

WALLY

In case I win that trip.

GLORIA

The sea's a lot different than a pool.

WALLY

How do you know?

GLORIA

Oh, I know.

Wally makes a disbelieving face that Gloria doesn't see. She puts a cigarette from her pack to her mouth.

GLORIA

Goddamned jellyfish and sharks and those things with spikes that killed the Crocodile Hunter. Nasty stuff in the sea.

WALLY

All kinds of beautiful stuff, too.

Gloria starts taking out a cigarette and getting it ready to smoke.

GLORIA

Whatever. You'll have plenty of time to soak, Wall. Five more years, six at the most. Then we're

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GLORIA (cont'd)  
gonna put our feet up by that Mesa  
Vista pool and drink frozen  
Margaritas, Jimmy Buffet-style.

She clears her throat, stands up, and heads out to smoke.

Wally watches the clothes and suds swish in the washing  
machine.

EXT. WALLY'S GARAGE - DAY

10

Wally (in a Hawaiian shirt) and Chuck drink beer and play  
darts in Wally's garage. Chuck fools around and sends a dart  
low on the wall. Next to it, there's a laundry basket with

YELLOW FLIPPERS, A SNORKEL MASK and A BEACH TOWEL.

CHUCK  
Whatcha got here?

WALLY  
Just some stuff.

CHUCK  
(holds up flipper)  
What the fuck for?

WALLY  
I'm going to win that trip,  
Chuckie. I can feel it.

CHUCK  
(crushes beer can)  
You a certified moron? I can't  
tell.

Wally grabs the flipper and puts it back into the basket.

WALLY  
You're just jealous.

CHUCK  
Wall, I'm as likely to marry  
Britney Spears as you are to win  
that trip.

WALLY  
Britney likes rednecks, Chuck.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK  
Fine. Taylor Swift.

INT. YMCA SWIMMING POOL - DAY

11

Wally, pasty white and out-of-shape, emerges from the dressing room already wearing a snorkel mask. He moves awkwardly toward the pool, searching around.

At one end, there's a GROUP OF PEOPLE doing water aerobics. One girl is a little younger with a nice figure. Wally stares at the tops of her breasts as they bob up and down above the water.

Suddenly, a young man (SCUBA DUDE, 30s, muscular) appears in front of Wally.

SCUBA DUDE  
Hey man. You here for the adult swimmer cert?

WALLY  
(removes the goggles)  
Huh?

Looking the SCUBA DUDE over, Wally finally sees the SMALL SWIM GROUP at the deep end of the pool waiting to take the lesson.

WALLY CONTD  
(obviously nervous)  
I'm ready. Let's do it.

SCUBA DUDE  
Right on. I'm Jeff.

WALLY  
(shaking hands)  
Wally.

They walk together toward the group.

SCUBA DUDE  
So, Wally. Ever snorkeled before?

WALLY  
Um...no.

SCUBA DUDE  
Right on. Change your life, man!

Wally nods and struggles to sit at the edge of the pool with the group of other adult swimmers.

(CONTINUED)



Catching the sight of his large, bare, hairy belly, Wally crosses his arms across his body uncomfortably.

SCUBA DUDE

OK. Aloha everybody. I bet you never thought you could breathe underwater, eh? Ha.

Wally gazes down at the bottom of the pool and looks at his feet dangling in the water.

SCUBA DUDE

OK! Lets step into the water. Ladies and gentlemen, with confidence!

One by one, the swimmers step into the pool. Wally is last. He seems insecure.

Large LADY IN A PINK SWIM CAP gives him an encouraging smile.

Wally gets his feet into the water but immediately seeks the the bottom.

EXT. MAILBOX - DAY

12

Wally, in his bathrobe, gets the mail, and looks through it. No contest notice.

He greets a NEIGHBOR

and goes back home.

INT. BINGO PALACE - NIGHT

13

Wally and Gloria sit at the table. They survey their bingo cards and occasionally dab a square.

Gloria puts her cigarette in an ashtray. Wally focuses in on her CHIPPED HOT PINK NAIL POLISH.

She SCRATCHES THE DRY SKIN with makeup on her face

and then picks up the cigarette again, flicking the ash.

A bit of the ash falls on Wally's WonderWorks Inc. postcard that he has set up in the corner with a plastic troll doll.

(CONTINUED)

WALLY  
Watch it, Glo.

She shushes him.

The postcard is now creased and slightly dirty. He snatches it, rubs it against his shirt, places it in the other corner, far from Gloria's cigarette.

GLORIA  
Almost. Come on. I-22... I-22...

Wally fixates on Gloria's LONG FINGERNAILS tapping on the card table. He reaches gently for her hand to calm it down.

GLORIA  
Would you stop that?

She shushes him again and focuses on the game.

Focusing on Gloria's face, Wally's vision goes blurry.

EXT. HOT TUB - DAY

14

Behind her, the row of OLD FOLKS playing bingo syncs-up dabbing in time.

His vision goes blurry again, and refocusing, the OLD FOLKS hold giant margaritas. They are all sitting in a hot tub.

Wally is flanked by two OLDER LADIES.

Someone in the background pushes a man in a wheelchair.

Wally shakes his head, and he's back to staring down the bingo row.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

15

With the sounds and light from *Wheel of Fortune* on TV, Wally sits in the Lazy-Boy reading a novel, *MOBY DICK*.

Gloria files her nails and looks at the TV.

He gets up from the Lazy-Boy and crosses the living room. Gloria doesn't even notice.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

16

Wally locks the door. He takes off his shirt.

He stands sideways, checking out his gut and arms in the mirror. He stretches his arms across his chest and then sits down on the bath mat.

Assuming a position on his back, Wally ATTEMPTS SOME SIT UPS.

As he tries, he bangs an elbow against the wall, knocks over the little trash can and falls back on the tile.

GLORIA (O.S.)  
What are you doing in there?!

Wally presses his fingers against his eyelids and sighs.

INT. YMCA SWIMMING POOL - DAY

17

Wally and Scuba Dude stand in the pool facing each other.

SCUBA DUDE  
Masks on. Ready and in the water!

Wally takes a big breath and expertly jumps into the water.

Underwater, he swims like a pro, gawking at the KICKING LEGS OF PEOPLE swimming in the pool.

Scuba Dude swims by and gives Wally the OK SIGN.

The underwater sounds change to crashing waves...

Wally sees a Bikini Girl underwater swimming up to him and away.

\*  
\*

EXT. SAILBOAT - DAY

18

The landscape is bright, ocean and sky for miles. Hawaiian music fades in.

Wally's hands are on the shiny silver wheel of a sailboat. Woman's voices laugh somewhere behind him.

(CONTINUED)

BIKINI GIRL (O.S.)  
Hey, Cappy! I made you a drink.

Wally turns to the Bikini Girl holding a coconut drink with a pink cocktail umbrella. Wally grabs the drink and the Bikini Girl points out to sea and gasps.

Wally notices smoke in the air and then a distant sounds of Wheel of Fortune. \*

GLORIA (O.S.)  
Is that a shark? \*

Wally looks over. Gloria stands next to him in a bathing suit, smoking, in full makeup, holding a remote control. She's pointing, too. \*

GLORIA CONTD  
Oh God. It is a shark. "We're going to need a bigger boat."

She's imitating Quint from JAWS. Wally shakes his head.

GLORIA CONTD  
(directly to the camera)  
Mesa Vista Retirement Living,  
Wally. Five years, six at the most.

Wally slaps himself and Gloria is replaced by TWO NEARLY-IDENTICAL BIKINI GIRLS. \*

BIKINI GIRLS  
Dolphins!

The second Bikini Girl sings a song to Wally and performs a dance routine. \*

The first one jons and they dance together. \*

The girls gather at the front of the boat, wind blowing in their hair. One at a time, they SALUTE Wally. Third Bikini Girl is revealed. \*

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

19

Wally wakes up to Gloria coughing in the bedroom while getting dressed.

He pushes his fingertips on his eyelids, sighing.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING 20

Wally, in his robe, brings a pile of mail onto the dining table. The clock is still there unfinished. Wally shuffles through the mail.

\*  
\*  
\*

He finds a POSTCARD SIMILAR TO HIS CRUISE POSTCARD.

On this one, the same couple stands on a beautiful tropical golf course.

*"You won a round of golf on every continent!"*

it reads. This time is addressed to Gloria.

He takes his old postcard from Moby Dick and puts the two side by side. When he looks closer, the man and bikini-clad girl on the yacht now have CREASES that appear like WRINKLES ON THEIR FACES.

Wally slumps in the chair looking crestfallen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY 20A

Wally, still in his robe, looks through the window.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY 21

Wally, still in his robe, sits in his Lazy-Boy holding a beer.

He stares through the window at the empty suburban street.

Gloria walks in wearing her waitress uniform, with a coffee and puts some show on the TV.

Wally looks unhappy.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - DAY 22

Wally stands at the counter and stares into space absentmindedly. He looks down and picks up his postcard from the copy of *MOBY DICK* that sits on the counter.

WALLY

Hey, Chuck. You ever get these in the mail?

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Yeah. All the time. You know it's a scam, right? You didn't call them and give information, did ya?

WALLY

Nah. They make good bookmarks.

CHUCK

You did. You fucking called them, didn't you?

An attractive TATTOOED GIRL walks up to the counter.

TATTOOED GIRL

Size eight.

CHUCK

How's it going?

The girl ignores him. Chuck doesn't move to help her though, and Wally gives him an exasperated look. He puts the postcard back in the book, grabs the shoes, and plops them on the counter. He reopens *MOBY DICK*.

TATTOOED GIRL

Good book.

Wally looks at her, surprised by the attention.

His face slowly brightens up.

TATTOOED GIRL

"I am tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote."

WALLY

"Call me Ishmael."

A moment between them...

TATTOOED GIRL

OK, Ishmael. Great book.

She gives Wally a last look, gives a cute salute, and leaves.

Chuck watches the exchange unbelieving. He looks at the Tattooed Girl leaving. Then he looks at Wally.

Wally smiles as if he couldn't believe what just happened.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

23

Wally looks under the hood of his truck with a flashlight. Gloria walks in. She holds Wally's flippers.

GLORIA

What are these for? Whatcha doing?

He looks at her for a moment.

WALLY

I'm sick of sharing the Saturn.

GLORIA

We don't do nothing you can't share for.

WALLY

You just don't understand.

GLORIA

What don't I understand?

WALLY

Well, maybe I got things I wanna do.

GLORIA

Like what? Go snorkeling? Jesus H!

She throws the flippers on a pile of stuff, and leaves.

Wally picks up the flippers and dusts them off.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

24

Wally makes a row of

CHEESE AND WHITE BREAD SANDWICHES

at the counter. He puts them in Ziplock baggies.

He fills a thermos with coffee.

Next to him on the counter is a sleeping bag.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

25

Gloria stands by the door watching Wally pack his beat up truck with a duffel bag, a little cooler, and his flippers.

Wally looks excited, younger. He wears a brand new T-shirt.

GLORIA

The truck's never gonna make it.

WALLY

We'll see.

Wally holds a new book against his chest - ROBINSON CRUSOE.

GLORIA

Well, don't call me when you break down.

Wally turns around and walks to Gloria. He kisses her awkwardly on the cheek.

WALLY

I'll be back in a week. I promise.

He heads to the truck and gets in. He rolls down the window and waves at her sweetly.

GLORIA

Call me when you get there, okay?

She looks after him as he leaves the driveway. He waves again.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

26

Speeding down the highway, Wally plays with the radio, looking chipper, younger even.

The postcard is placed in the back of his sun visor.

Red Hawaiian shirt hangs in the back.

EXT. DRIVING MONTAGE SEQUENCE - DAY

27

SCENERY

A FUNNY SIGN

AN INTERESTING BUILDING

OPEN ROAD



## PINK FLAMINGOS ON THE LAWN

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT 28

Wally lies in the back of his pick up in his sleeping bag looking up at the stars.

EXT. BEACH - DAY 29

Wally's feet take careful steps on a wooden boardwalk.

He looks around at beach and ocean waves as far as he can see.

He sits down on the sand, closes his eyes, and enjoys the sunshine.

When he opens his eyes, he sees a yacht.

On the yacht, there is A GIRL IN A RED BIKINI and a GUY IN A WHITE CAP. The girl waves toward the shore.

Wally waves back.

EXT. BEACH - DAY 30

Later that day, the beach is almost empty. The sun is low.

Wally walks toward the water. He carries his yellow flippers. He puts them on. Then, a snorkeling mask.

Step by step, he enters the water. Slowly, he submerges his body and starts swimming into the sea.

FADE OUT

**MELISSA REMARK**  
**CALL ME CAPPY**

Wally MacDonald had just set up his TV tray and clicked to channel eight for Wheel of Fortune when he noticed the colorful pamphlet sticking out of the mail pile.

“Congratulations!” it read at the top. He leaned over and plucked it from under the bills and junk flyers. You have won a trip around the world on your very own yacht! was scrawled underneath in cheerful lettering with a photograph of a man and a woman on a gleaming white boat, presumably sailing into a tropical harbor. The sea was turquoise and the man sported the type of captain’s hat with a shiny navy brim. He flipped the pamphlet twice, scanning it for scams.

“Would you look at this?” Wally said with a mouthful of meatloaf.

Gloria ignored him at first, as usual, but when he insisted and tossed her the folded cardboard, she put on her glasses and read the news, front and back.

“It’s a scam, Wally. One in a million win,” she said, flinging it back.

“Still, it’s a chance,” he said. “And that’s my name on there, not yours. Remember that.” He studied the pamphlet again—the W of Wallace falling under the dainty foot of the young woman in a red bikini—and he wondered, when was the last time I saw a real girl in a bikini?

Behind the counter at North Platte Lanes, where he was the alley supervisor, Wally daydreamed about beaches the color of sugar, skinny palm trees swaying so high you could only see the tops from a distance, and of girls, all shapes and shades like the kinds in Elvis movies.

“You ever seen the ocean?” he asked the shoe boy. “Nope,” the kid said, without a glimmer of interest.

That night, Wally’s mind stirred as he lay his bald head down against his flat pillow and listened to Gloria snore. The low, even wheeze became waves lapping against a shore, and then against that gleaming white boat. Feeling warmth, he opened his eyes to buttery sunshine, sparkling like a disco ball off the water.

“Where to next, Captain?” said a glamorous voice. Coming into view, with a coconut drink in her hand, was a blonde in a bikini, a yellow polka-dot bikini. She smiled, a hand on her tanned hip.

He smiled back. “Call me Cappy.”

The next day, Wally went to the library to use the Internet. He wanted to look up the company on the pamphlet—WonderWorks, Inc.—and make sure they were legit. Sure enough, there they were, with a website and blinking ads and everything. He signed up using his code and was told he was #108,560. If those were all the people who had entered to win, he thought he had a pretty good chance at the jackpot.

“You’re doing what now?” Gloria asked one day when he asked her if he owned swim trunks.

“I told you. I’m taking scuba lessons at The Y.”

“What for?” She crushed out a cigarette in the ashtray on the counter and flipped pork chops in the pan. “You don’t even know where The Y is.”

“In case I win that trip around the world,” he said without reservation. “The sea is a lot different than a pool,” she said. “How would you know?” he said. After all, he thought, if he didn’t win the trip at

least he’d have a chance at seeing some girls in bikinis at the local pool. It had been too long to remember.

Next time Wally was at the library checking the Internet, he asked the old lady librarian for some help finding books about sailing. There weren’t very many, being that they lived in North Platte, but he checked out all they had—Seamanship, Sailing the Portuguese Coast, and Catalina: A Sailor’s Playground. He was surprised by all of the foreign terminology and bought a hefty dictionary at the Walmart for some help, as well as a paperback with a pirate ship on the cover and a life jacket.

A year passed. Wally hadn’t received any reply from WonderWorks, Inc. and when Gloria and some others started to give him grief about these nautical dreams, Wally thought he’d better do something. He’d passed the scuba certification tests, after all, and the blonde in the polka dot bikini dreams had never gone away. The whole thing agitated him now—Gloria, the Lanes, Pat Sajack, the library, all of North Platte. He wanted to taste those damn coconut drinks for real and feel bona fide sea breeze on his head.

Wally had a cousin who lived in Tampa, but he’d never been. Mandy would let him stay a few days, he figured, and so Wally bought a bus ticket from North Platte to Tampa, and told work and Gloria that he had to go see his dying uncle in Florida. Twenty-three hours on a bus would fly by, he figured, with his latest swashbuckling paperback and all that scenery flashing past the window.

When Wally stepped off the bus in Tampa, he didn’t think twice about finding Mandy. He followed his instincts, surprised by the salt in the air, down to the Gulf of Mexico and put his feet in the water, letting them sink into the wet sand. There were girls in bikinis lying on towels and batting a beach ball around with a bunch of teenage boys. He strolled the fishing pier, marveling at the actual sailboats, yachts, and massive cruise ships out on the sea, and hung about until dusk when a pod of dolphins appeared close by to feed. This is really something, Wally thought. Really something.



# Call Me Gappy

A FILM BY **Maja Holzinger**

Wally never knew he wanted anything out of life until he fell for a junk mail scam.



## A UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS THESIS FILM

**Length:** ca. 20 min

**Locations:** New Orleans, greater New Orleans area

**Genre:** a heart-warming drama filled with subtle humor

**Director:** Maja Holzinger

(239) 470 - 4222

majapulcheria@gmail.com

**Producer:** Andrea Kuehnel

(504) 758 - 2005

a.kuehnel@hotmail.com

**Find us on facebook:** [www.facebook.com/callmecappy2013](http://www.facebook.com/callmecappy2013)

**For more information contact us:** [callmecappy2013@gmail.com](mailto:callmecappy2013@gmail.com)



## NOTE FROM THE Director

**“You are what you think, having become what you thought.”**

The Buddhist saying serves as a premise of this story. It is a movie about a man who gets inspired to take his life out of the mundane cycle of routine. The desire comes to him unexpectedly, caused by a piece of junk mail. Surprisingly, a piece of pure scam promising Wally a tropical journey on his very own yacht, becomes a turning point in Wally's life. It evokes a poignant change of who he is. It is the desire for a richer life experience that pushes Wally out of his North Platte, Nebraska, small town reality to do something unexpected. Will he ever get to sail in the ocean on his very own yacht surrounded with girls in bikinis? Probably not; but he has a dream, and that on its own will lead to a subtle but profound change in his life. This dream gives him strength to experience life with its sadness and beauty.

The Japanese phrase “Mono-no-aware” is used to describe the sweet and bitter feeling experienced while we are aware of each passing moment that disappears, like leaves falling down from the tree, waves vanishing as soon as they reach the shore.



## NOTE FROM THE **Producer**

**“Call Me Cappy”** is a heartwarming story about a man, Wally MacDonald, who has lived most of life without a big dream or desire. Caught in his boring and drab everyday routine in between his job at the local bowling alley and TV dinners and bingo games with his wife Gloria he falls for a junk mail scam which promises him a trip on his own yacht, something he never dared to dream about. Suddenly he realizes that there is more to life than what he knows and what he is used to and that it is never too late to have a dream.

My main motivation to produce this film was the story about a very relatable character who feels like we could all know him. Even though I am not in a similar age or situation I know a lot of people from personal experience who are like Wally MacDonald. People who never left their small town home and happily settled in after they got married and found a job that pays them not much but enough to provide for their living (expenses). But these are also people that never got out of their little bordered reality mainly because they never wanted to and just forgot over the time of their lives that there is more to the world than their town.

I do not think that everyone should necessarily be a world traveler or adventurer. Some people might be perfectly happy staying home. But I believe it is important to have a dream, something to strive and to live for. In the end, this is what makes our lives memorable and worth living.

## Synopsis

Wally MacDonald, early 60s, a bowling alley worker, leads the most ordinary, perfectly uneventful life in a small Midwestern town of North Platte. His life changes one day when he finds a piece of junk mail informing him that he has won a tropical cruise on a luxurious yacht. From now on, his imagination is fed by the images of girls in bikinis and vast oceans. Behind the counter of North Platte Lanes, where he works as the alley supervisor, Wally daydreamed about beaches the color of sugar, skinny palm trees swaying so high you could only see the tops from a distance and of girls, all shapes and shades like the kinds in Elvis movies. Wally becomes obsessed with the desire to see the ocean. He studies books about sailing, takes a scuba diving course at the local YMCA and dreams of girls in bikinis. No one treats him seriously including his own wife. Finally, he has to face the fact that the whole thing was just a scam. To everyone's surprise, he decides to fix his truck and take a road trip to the coast.

"Call Me Cappy"

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239-470-4222  
[majapulcheria@gmail.com](mailto:majapulcheria@gmail.com)





Drab beginning: Focus on browns and yellows. Set dressed with old, shabby furniture.



## Visual Concept

Cool colors with colorful accents when Wally makes changes to his life.



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## VISUAL INSPIRATION Boat Dream Sequence





## CHARACTERS **Wally**



### **Wally MacDonald**

Male. Caucasian. 50ish, introvert, average looking, out of shape but not overweight, stuck in a rut. Wally works in a bowling alley in a small Nebraskan town. He allows his wife Gloria to control his everyday life. Wally, who had never traveled before, becomes overwhelmed by a dream to see the ocean after he receives a scam mail advertising a tropical cruise. LEAD

## CHARACTERS **Gloria**



### **Gloria MacDonald**

Female. Caucasian. 50ish, teased hair, large breasted, robust, wears a lot of makeup. Gloria is a waitress at a local diner. She likes her routine, which includes watching TV-game shows, visiting a bingo palace and bossing her husband around. She counts the days to her retirement life in a 55 + community. LEAD



## CHARACTERS **Bikini Girl**

### **Bikini Girl**

Female. Caucasian. 20s, Attractive. She is a product of Wally's imagination. She appears in his dreams as a companion on a tropical cruise. SUPPORTING





## CHARACTERS Scuba Dude & Chuck

### Scuba Dude

Male. 30-something, Long hair, muscular, surfer type with high spirits. He is passionate about his job as a swimming and scuba diving instructor. He encourages Wally to cross boundaries and take on new challenges.

SUPPORTING



### Chuck

Male. Caucasian. 40/50ish, single, stuck in a time where he used to be a teenage heartthrob and does not acknowledge his faded looks, lewd humor. He is a good friend to Wally, they work together at the bowling alley. SUPPORTING



## THE "CALL ME CAPPY" Team

DIRECTOR **Maja Holzinger**

PRODUCER **Andrea Kuehnel**

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **Trenton Mynatt**

ASSOCIATED PRODUCERS **Margaret Broach  
Jordon McVey**

WRITER **Melissa Remark**

PRODUCTION DESIGNER **Margaret Broach**

SCORE **Rainer Holzinger**

EDITOR **Maja Holzinger**



## DIRECTOR **Maja Holzinger** Bio



Born and raised in the Baltic coast town of Sopot, Poland, Maja Holzinger is an author of several short films, both documentary and fiction. Currently based in New Orleans, Maja has started her adventure in film with a short documentary *Berlin Mitte* that was screened during the Documentary Film Festival in Berlin. Upon earning her Master's Degree in Film Studies from the University of Adam Mickiewicz, Maja moved to United States. Two short productions shot on Super 8 are the effect of Maja's adventure with the Northwest Film Center in Portland Oregon. One of them, *Man with a Toilet* won a prize at the UNO Film Festival. Her participation in the 48-hour Film Competition in Florida brought her first awards in Best in Show and Best in Pro Category. Recently, Maja has completed a short film, *Rosebud*, that is currently at the last stage of post-production. The new project, *Call Me Cappy*, is an effect of a meeting with writer Melissa Remark whose short story was turned into a screenplay. Maja will be making this film as her thesis film as part of her completion of a masters degree in Film Production from the University of New Orleans.





PRODUCER **Andrea Kuehnel** **Bio**



Andrea Kuehnel was born in 1988 in Zwickau, Germany. After finishing her Bachelors Degree in TV production with a focus on TV camera and having worked for a local TV station for 3 years, Andrea decided to go into the direction she had always wanted to work in: film. With the support of a Fulbright Scholarship Andrea was able to start a MFA program in Film Production at the University of New Orleans, where she just started her second year. Andrea produced and directed a short documentary film entitled *Signs of Life*, which will be screening amongst others at the New Orleans Film Festival. Andrea's main interest is producing and directing.



WRITER **Melissa Remark** Bio



Melissa Remark is an MFA candidate at the University of New Orleans, where she served as Associate Editor of Bayou Magazine. She earned an English BA at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario and a Film and Media Production BA at Humber College in Toronto. Currently, she is working on a novel.



DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **TRENTON MYNATT** Bio



Trenton was born and raised in north Arkansas. He attended the University of Central Arkansas and earned his Bachelors of Science degree in Digital Film. Trenton is currently a graduate student at the University of New Orleans earning his MFA in Film Production. Trenton has made and shot multiple short films, worked on multiple commercials, and a feature film. Trenton's undergraduate film was nominated for best Arkansas Director in 2012 and he has served as Cinematographer on several festival running shorts. Trenton is currently involved in several graduate films at the University of New Orleans including Cinematographer for *Call Me Cappy*.



## PRODUCTION DESIGNER **Margaret Broach** Bio



Margaret Broach received her BFA from The University of South Alabama in Graphic Design with a minor in Communications with a track in Television, Radio, and Film in 2003. She worked as a professional graphic designer in Mobile, Alabama, for eight years, while simultaneously making short films. She helped create two film organizations in Mobile, The Mobile Film Group (a networking group for Mobile filmmakers) and The Student and Filmmaker Alliance (a non-profit organization created to encourage middle school students to read and write). She's won awards for short films created in scramble competitions, *Night Terror*, *S.S.A.*, and *KARMA*; as well as 1st place in a side competition for the Sidewalk Motion Picture Festival in Birmingham, Alabama, for the short documentary *Out-Touching Cancer*. Currently, she's working towards her MFA in Film Production at The University of New Orleans.



# Branding | Marketing

Color Pallet for printed materials:  
CMYK | 300 dpi to scale



C=100 M=90 Y=10 K=0



C=15 M=100 Y=100 K=0



C=0 M=0 Y=100 K=0



C=0 M=0 Y=0 K=100

Color Pallet for web materials:  
RGB | 72 dpi to scale



R=37 G=64 B=143



R=210 G=35 B=42



R=255 G=35 B=42



R=0 G=0 B=0

Logo Font is in:

# Poplar Std Black

Header Font in Portfolio is:

# Futura Condensed Medium

Size: 36 pt

Text/Paragraph font in Portfolio is:

# Futura Medium

Size: 10 pt

Letting: 18 pt

"Call Me Cappy"

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# Call Me Cappy

*a film by Maja Holzinger*



A film by MAJA HOLZINGER Starring RITCHIE MONTGOMERY RONNIE HOOKS  
Producers ANDREA KUEHNEL and MELISSA REMARK Written by MELISSA REMARK Cinematography TRENTON MYNATT  
Music IVORY McCANN and RAINER HOLZINGER Editors MAJA HOLZINGER and ANNA DOBROWODZKA Directed by MAJA HOLZINGER

THE LIST OF PRODUCTION DOCUMENTS INCLUDE:

1. Actor Release forms for each speaking role.
2. Extra Release forms for each non-speaking role.
3. Group release forms for each location.
4. Location contracts for each location used in the production.
5. Location release forms.
6. Writer's agreement.

## ORIGINAL MUSIC LICENSING AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT made and entered into as of MARCH 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 by and between MAJA HOLZINGER, Director & Producer of "Call Me Cappy" (herein after the "Producer"), located at: 2004 Lakeshore Dr. New Orleans and RAINER HOLZGINER (herein after the "Artist"), located at:

2918 O'Reilly St. New Orleans

in regards to the musical composition embodied in the film "CALL ME CAPPY" (herinafter the "Picture").

IN CONSIDERATION of mutual covenants and conditions herein contained the parties hereby agree as follows:

1. The Artist grants the Producer, her successors, assigns, and licensees the non-exclusive right to record, produce and reproduce, the lyrics and musical compositions, or any portion thereof, for use in the production of the Picture "CALL ME CAPPY". These rights include the use of the lyrics and musical composition for advertisements trailers, marketing, and promotion of the Picture created by Producer.
2. The Artist grants the Producer, her successors, assigns, and licensees the non-exclusive right to reproduce, perform, and edit any existing recordings, or any portion thereof, for use in the production of the picture. These rights include the use of any existing recordings the Artist may have for advertisements, trailers, marketing, and promotion of the Picture created by the Producer.
3. The Artist grants the Producer the right to exhibit, distribute, exploit, market, and perform the music for the Picture, created by the Producer, throughout the universe in any and all media now known or hereafter devised. These distribution rights include the right to advertise, promote or market the music for the Picture, created by the Producer throughout the universe in any and all media now known or hereafter devised.
4. The Artist will retain all rights to musical compositions, lyrics and sound recording created by him/her for the Picture.
5. The Producer will retain all rights to the Picture, created by the Producer.
6. The Producer hereby grants the right for the Artist to use the Picture, created by the Producer, for promotional use only. This does not include public screenings, television rights, or theatrical distribution. Any public performance of the Picture must be approved in writing by the Producer.
7. The Artist is not legally bound from re-creating a picture using the lyrics and music compositions for the Picture, if and when the opportunity presents itself with another company, individual, entity, or educational institution. The Producer does not have exclusive rights to the lyrics, musical composition or sound recording.
8. The Artist warrants that no promise of payment or compensation was made or will be made by the Producer for the Artist's participation in this project.
9. The Artist agrees to indemnify and hold the Producer and her successors, assigns, and licensees free and harmless from any and all claims, liabilities, costs, losses, damages or expenses including, but not limited to, all attorney's fees, and costs reasonably incurred in connection therewith, which may result or arise out of any breach or failure of any covenant and warranty of the Artist contained in this agreement.
10. The Producer agrees to indemnify and hold the Artist, and their successors, assigns and licensees free and harmless from any and all claims, liabilities, costs, losses, damages or expenses including, but not limited to, all attorney's fees, and costs



reasonably incurred in connection therewith, which may result or arise out of any breach or failure of any covenant and warranty of the Producer contained in this agreement.

11. The Artist warrants and represents that he is free to enter into this license and that this agreement does not conflict with any existing contracts or agreements to which the Artist is a party. The Artist warrants that he maintains all rights to the lyrics and musical score for the Picture. The Artist also warrants that he owns all rights to master recordings of the Picture.

12. This agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Louisiana applicable to agreements executed and to be wholly performed herein. This agreement is not valid until signed by the Producer and the Artist. The Artist agrees that this document constitutes the entire agreement between the parties superseding any previous agreements written or oral. The Artist further agrees that any modification be in writing and signed by all parties hereto.

Signed: R. DeSinger Date: 03/1/2014  
PRODUCER

Signed: R. DeSinger Date: 03/1/2014  
ARTIST

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IN CONSIDERATION of mutual covenants and conditions herein contained the parties hereby agree as follows:

1. The Artist grants the Producer, her successors, assigns, and licensees the non-exclusive right to record, produce and reproduce, the lyrics and musical compositions, or any portion thereof, for use in the production of the Picture "CALL ME CAPPY". These rights include the use of the lyrics and musical composition for advertisements trailers, marketing, and promotion of the Picture created by Producer.
2. The Artist grants the Producer, her successors, assigns, and licensees the non-exclusive right to reproduce, perform, and edit any existing recordings, or any portion thereof, for use in the production of the picture. These rights include the use of any existing recordings the Artist may have for advertisements, trailers, marketing, and promotion of the Picture created by the Producer.
3. The Artist grants the Producer the right to exhibit, distribute, exploit, market, and perform the music for the Picture, created by the Producer, throughout the universe in any and all media now known or hereafter devised. These distribution rights include the right to advertise, promote or market the music for the Picture, created by the Producer throughout the universe in any and all media now known or hereafter devised.
4. The Artist will retain all rights to musical compositions, lyrics and sound recording created by him/her for the Picture.
5. The Producer will retain all rights to the Picture, created by the Producer.
6. The Producer hereby grants the right for the Artist to use the Picture, created by the Producer, for promotional use only. This does not include public screenings, television rights, or theatrical distribution. Any public performance of the Picture must be approved in writing by the Producer.
7. The Artist is not legally bound from re-creating a picture using the lyrics and music compositions for the Picture, if and when the opportunity presents itself with another company, individual, entity, or educational institution. The Producer does not have exclusive rights to the lyrics, musical composition or sound recording.
8. The Artist warrants that no promise of payment or compensation was made or will be made by the Producer for the Artist's participation in this project.
9. The Artist agrees to indemnify and hold the Producer and her successors, assigns, and licensees free and harmless from any and all claims, liabilities, costs, losses, damages or expenses including, but not limited to, all attorney's fees, and costs reasonably incurred in connection therewith, which may result or arise out of any breach or failure of any covenant and warranty of the Artist contained in this agreement.
10. The Producer agrees to indemnify and hold the Artist, and their successors, assigns and licensees free and harmless from any and all claims, liabilities, costs, losses, damages or expenses including, but not limited to, all attorney's fees, and costs

reasonably incurred in connection therewith, which may result or arise out of any breach or failure of any covenant and warranty of the Producer contained in this agreement.

11. The Artist warrants and represents that he is free to enter into this license and that this agreement does not conflict with any existing contracts or agreements to which the Artist is a party. The Artist warrants that he maintains all rights to the lyrics and musical score for the Picture. The Artist also warrants that he owns all rights to master recordings of the Picture.

12. This agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Louisiana applicable to agreements executed and to be wholly performed herein. This agreement is not valid until signed by the Producer and the Artist. The Artist agrees that this document constitutes the entire agreement between the parties superseding any previous agreements written or oral. The Artist further agrees that any modification be in writing and signed by all parties hereto.

Signed: [Signature] Date: 11/18/14  
PRODUCER

Signed: [Signature] Date: 11/18/14  
ARTIST



SCREEN ACTORS SCREEN ACTORS GUILD-AMERICAN  
FEDERATION OF TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS  
STUDENT FILM AGREEMENT

TITLE: " Call Me Cappy " \_\_\_\_\_

FILMMAKER:

Producer (Student): Maja Holzinger, Director

SS #: 767-96-6251

Address: 4326 Jena St.

City: New Orleans

State: LA Zip 70125

Phone: 239-470-4222

Email: mmholzin@uno.edu

BUDGET: Project financed by: Personal Funds & Nims Scholarship

Cash expenditures \$ 12,000

+

Crew deferrals \$ \_\_\_\_\_

+

Equipment deferrals \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Budget = \$ 12,000

PRODUCTION: Shooting Location: New Orleans, LA & Orange Beach, Alabama

Total # shoot days 8 Dates: Start 11/9/2013 Finish 12/19/2013

Edited running time 20 min

# of Performers 7 Professional 1 Non - Professional 6

Initial reason for producing this film: Maja Holzinger's Thesis Film / Academic

Intention(s) upon completion of project: Send to festivals

Name of School: University of New Orleans (UNO)

## SCREEN ACTORS GUILD-PRODUCERS PENSION & HEALTH PLANS

RE: LETTER OF ADHERENCE

To: SAG-AFTRA SIGNATORIES

You are concurrently signing a Collective Bargaining Agreement or Letter of Adherence thereto with Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (hereafter, "SAG-AFTRA"). The SAG-AFTRA Collective Bargaining Agreements require that you sign a Letter of Adherence to the Screen Actors Guild - Producers Pension Plan and Health Plan Trust Agreements. Please complete, sign, and return this letter to SAG-AFTRA. SAG-AFTRA will forward it to the Plan Office.

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To: The Trustees of the Screen Actors Guild – Producers Pension Plan and Health Plan for Motion Picture Actors

The undersigned company is signatory to a Collective Bargaining Agreement or Letter of Adherence thereto with SAG-AFTRA, which provides for contributions to be made by such signatory companies into the Screen Actors Guild – Producers Pension Plan and Health Plan for Motion Picture Actors. With respect to such Collective Bargaining Agreement and any further contract which the undersigned may enter into in extension, continuation or replacement thereof and subject thereto, the undersigned hereby agrees:

1. To become a party to and be bound by the Screen Actors Guild – Producers Pension Plan and Health Plan and the Trust Agreements adopted thereunder and pursuant thereto.
2. To accept and be bound by all amendments and supplements heretofore and hereafter made to the foregoing agreements and documents.
3. To accept the Producer Trustees and the Alternate Producer Trustees appointed under said Screen Actors Guild – Producers Pension Plan and Health Plan Trust Agreements, and their successors designated as provided therein.

Company

4326 Jena St.

Address

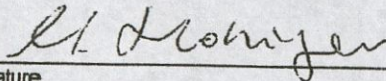
New Orleans, LA 70125

City, State and Zip

Maja Holzinger, Director

Print Name and Title

Signature



11/08/2013

Date

- Please note that the Plans' acceptance of this Letter of Adherence is contingent on its approval by the Board of Trustees of the Screen Actors Guild – Producers Pension and Health Plans

3601 WEST OLIVE AVENUE • P.O. BOX 7830 • BURBANK, CA 91510-7830  
(818) 954-9400 • FAX (818) 953-9880 • (800) 777-4013 (EXCLUDES LOS ANGELES AREA)



**SCREEN ACTORS GUILD-AMERICAN  
FEDERATION OF TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS  
STUDENT FILM AGREEMENT**

**TITLE:** " Call Me Cappy "

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Edited running time 20 min

# of Performers 7 Professional 1 Non - Professional 6

**Initial reason for producing this film:** Maja Holzinger's Thesis Film / Academic

**Intention(s) upon completion of project:** Send to festivals

**Name of School:** University of New Orleans (UNO)

19. Application of Basic Agreement

Except as expressly modified herein, all terms and conditions of the current Basic Agreement shall apply to the engagement and performance of professional performers hereunder. All disputes arising hereunder shall be subject to arbitration in accordance with Section 9 of the Basic Agreement.

20. Photocopies of Said Agreement to all Professional Performers

Producer understands and agrees to photocopy this Agreement and make it immediately available to all professional performers. Producer shall bear the entire cost of reproducing this Agreement for the express benefit of all professional performers whom the Producer utilizes.

PRODUCER

SAG-AFTRA

ACCEPTED, AND AGREED TO:

ACCEPTED, AND AGREED TO:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Producer/Student Signature)

*Justin Kennedy*  
(SAG-AFTRA Signature)

Maja Holzinger

*M. Holzinger*  
(Print Name)

11/13/13  
(Date)

11/08/2013

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

If a letter from the Producer's instructor confirming that the student is enrolled at that educational institution, and is undertaking the project pursuant to a course requirement is not separately provided, the following is required:

The above signed student is making the aforementioned film pursuant to a course requirement.

*L. Medina*  
(Professor Signature)

Laura Medina

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

Name of Educational Institution: University of New Orleans

Date: 11/08/2013

**CALL ME CAPPY BUDGET**

Class: Thesis Film  
 Project Title: Call me Cappy  
 Producer: Andrea Kuehnel  
 Director: Maja Holzinger  
 Script Date: 8th Draft

Budget Prepared by: Andrea Kuehnel  
 Budget Date: 11-14-2013  
 Shoot Dates: 12-12-2013 - 12-19-2013  
 Delivery Date:

Acct#	Category Description	Page	Total
11-00	STORY / RIGHTS & WRITING	1	86
13-00	PRODUCER AND STAFF	1	0
14-00	DIRECTOR AND STAFF	1	0
16-00	CAST	1	1,586
<b>TOTAL ABOVE-THE-LINE</b>			<b>1,672</b>
20-00	EXTRAS & STAND-INS	3	645
21-00	PRODUCTION STAFF	4	0
22-00	PRODUCTION DESIGN	4	0
23-00	SET CONSTRUCTION	4	0
24-00	SET DECORATION	5	400
25-00	PROPS	5	300
26-00	SET OPERATIONS	7	1,350
27-00	LIGHTING	8	0
28-00	CAMERA & VIDEO	8	780
30-00	PRODUCTION SOUND	9	250
31-00	WARDROBE	9	450
32-00	MAKEUP & HAIR	10	350
33-00	SPECIAL EFFECTS	10	0
34-00	VISUAL EFFECTS	10	0
36-00	TRANSPORTATION	11	500
37-00	LOCATIONS & FACILITIES	11	3,262
	Contingency : 10,0%		1,276
<b>TOTAL PRODUCTION</b>			<b>9,563</b>
45-00	EDITORIAL	13	0
46-00	MUSIC & POST PRODUCTION SOUND	13	300
53-00	STOCK FOOTAGE	13	0
54-00	TOTAL POST PRODUCTION ALLOWANCE	13	1,500
<b>TOTAL POST PRODUCTION</b>			<b>1,800</b>
67-00	PRODUCTION INSURANCE	15	0
70-00	GENERAL EXPENSES	15	1,000
<b>TOTAL OTHER</b>			<b>1,000</b>
<b>Total Above-The-Line</b>			<b>1,672</b>
<b>Total Below-The-Line</b>			<b>12,363</b>
<b>Total Above and Below-The-Line</b>			<b>14,035</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>14,035</b>



## VITA

The author, Maja Holzinger, was born in Sopot, Poland. She obtained her Master's degree in Film Studies from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland. In 2011 she joined the University of New Orleans graduate program to pursue a MFA in Film Production.