



Small Town Murder Songs

Written and directed by Ed Gass-Donnelly

Starring Peter Stormare, Aaron Poole, Martha Plimpton
and Jill Hennessy

Running time- 75 minutes, Exhibition Format- HD

WORLD PREMIERE – 2010 TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL

Screens:

Friday, September 10	2:00pm	AGO / PRESS SCREENING
Sunday, September 12	7:00pm	AMC 6
Tuesday, September 14	12:30pm	Varsity 7
Thursday, September 16	11:45am	Scotiabank/ PRESS SCREENING
Friday, September 17	9:30pm	AMC 6

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Synopsis

A modern gothic tale of crime and redemption about Walter (**Peter Stormare**), an aging police officer from a small Ontario Mennonite town who hides a violent past until a local murder upsets the calm of his newly reformed life.

When a young, unidentified woman is found dead by the lake - the victim of a brutal and violent crime - Walter and his partner Jim (**Aaron Poole**) are called to the scene of the town's first murder investigation in decades. A senior OPP officer is called in to lead the investigation, relegating Walter and Jim to menial field work. Yet despite this, Walter comes up hard against the mistrust of his community, who will not let him put a violent incident in his past behind him.

Convinced that Rita (**Jill Hennessey**) his ex-lover may be lying to the OPP to protect her new boyfriend, Walter's newly-reformed life begins to unravel. As Walter tries to find the evidence to make an arrest before Rita is implicated, he struggles to maintain some measure of professional detachment, and the new life and new girlfriend (**Martha Plimpton**) he has worked so hard to preserve.

The Inspiration

The seeds of *Small Town Murder Songs* were sown in late 2008, when writer/director Ed Gass-Donnelly found himself inspired by the music on the concept album "Small Town Murder Scene" by the Fembots.

Donnelly had long maintained close ties to the indie music scene in Toronto, going back to his high school days at the Etobicoke School of the Arts, the original stomping grounds of many Toronto artists.

Of all the musicians that Gass-Donnelly maintains relationships with, his ongoing collaboration with The Fembots has been the most intimate and fruitful. Gass-Donnelly had directed music videos for the songs 'History Remade', 'So Long,', and "My Hands Are A City" and then invited the band to music supervise the eclectic score of his 2006 feature, the award-winning *This Beautiful City*.

"I have always had a close working relationship with musicians, both in terms of directing videos for them and being a fan of the music," says Gass-Donnelly. "I've also openly looked to music for inspiration, and as an integral background to my storytelling. In this case, the 'Small Town Murder Scene' album both sparked an idea around building a film around a soundtrack and an interest in exploring the ripples and aftershocks caused by a murder in a small community."

"*Small Town Murder Songs* was originally meant to be a series of disparate, disconnected scenes--far more art film than narrative. As the ideas developed a through-line, a hero began to emerge and the murder became the backdrop (or rather the catalyst) for a man to redeem

himself in the eyes of his community and reconcile his own faith and beliefs.

While Gass-Donnelly originally intended to score the film with the songs from the Fembots' album, as the project evolved, he realized he needed the music in the film to provide more contrast than mirror. "The writing had been coloured by the tone of the music on The Fembots album, and I felt that the film needed a contrasting hue to add tension," he comments.

In pre-production, a friend lent Gass-Donnelly the album "A Mountain Is A Mouth" by Bruce Peninsula. He instantly responded to the song "Satisfied" and envisioned it as the closing song in the film and then took this one step further and asked the band to write him a song for the intro so that the film would be book-ended by their unique and passionate sound.

In the end, Bruce Peninsula's music is woven throughout the film. Gass-Donnelly adds, "As editing continued, and the more I tried to discern what exactly I was creating, the more I discovered how much I needed their music."

He concludes, "Some people go into a movie knowing exactly what they will create. I like to think I am that person, but after two feature films, I realize I am not. In the making of the film I realized I can't be too rigid, I need to adapt and explore what is actually in front on me rather than cling to an idea that is a distant postcard. In this process I have been challenged to be a better filmmaker."

The Story

What evolved from Gass-Donnelly's original concept was a minimalist crime drama in the thematic vein of *No Country for Old Men* or *In Cold Blood*. While reminiscent of films by the Cohen Brothers or even Terrence Malick, *Small Town Murder Songs* strikes its own ground by subverting the expectations of the crime drama by focusing on the subtle transformation of its hero instead of on the mechanics of the crime and subsequent investigation.

The film takes the simple notion of the unsettling impact of a murder in a tiny, rural community as its starting point, and evolves into a nuanced examination of the insidious nature of violence, the unreliability of perception, and the battles that rage within every man.

Small Town Murder Songs begins with the discovery of a brutally murdered young woman, whose identity is unknown, in a small Mennonite community that has not seen such malignant violence in living memory.

Local police chief Walter and his partner Jim are called to the scene to investigate, but are clearly overwhelmed. Soon they are joined by a senior OPP investigator and marginalized to limited duties.

As the story unfolds, we learn that Walter has a violent history that he has worked hard to leave in the past, but nevertheless has created mistrust in the pacifist community in which he lives. And as he proceeds with investigating the details of the murder - consistently coming up against the ambivalent feelings the community has for him - we come to know a man of high morality, who believes so strongly in justice that its imperfect execution fills him with rage.

Producer Lee Kim comments, "What I love about the script is the fact that it starts out as a procedural and ropes us into believing that we are solving a crime, but then we realize we are watching the demise of a man who is desperately trying to find redemption. There is a stillness, a tranquility to the film that is juxtaposed against the rage and anger that is embedded in Walter's soul. Tonally, the film has elements of *No Country for Old Men* mixed in with Carlos Reygadas' *Silent Light*."

Gass-Donnelly adds, "The film is ultimately about a man who's struggling against his own nature and is trying to convince his community that he is a changed man. However, his critical failure stems from the fact that he thinks he can become a different man by changing the external circumstances of his life without acknowledging that a beast still dwells within."

At its core, the film continues a theme Gass-Donnelly began exploring in *This Beautiful City*. Actress Jill Hennessy comments, "Ultimately, like *This Beautiful City*, the film explores the complexities and sometimes unpleasant characteristics of human nature - the holy and the unholy in us all."

The Filmmakers

The film reunites Gass-Donnelly with two key collaborators, Producer Lee Kim and actor Aaron Poole.

The team co-produced Gass-Donnelly's first feature, *This Beautiful City*, and Poole also starred in a role that won him an ACTRA Award in 2008.

Poole and Gass-Donnelly first met in high school and began working together years later when Poole collaborated with him on the stage play *Descent*, which Gass-Donnelly later adapted into *This Beautiful City* with Poole's creative support.

When Gass-Donnelly and Poole began looking for a producing partner for *TBC*, it was Poole who introduced Ed to Lee Kim, who then joined them and has since become another trusted creative partner.

"Aaron is my creative right hand. I jam out all of my ideas with him and he story edits everything that I write," says Gass-Donnelly. "Lee is my co-conspirator in our plans for world domination - or at the very least we plot dastardly ways to make these films and disseminate them to the world."

“Ed and I are great friends and close creative allies, but that’s not to say that we always agree,” comments Poole. “In fact, quite the opposite is true. I think our creative relationship works because we do disagree often and that underlying tension challenges the work to move forward.”

Producer Lee Kim adds, “I am committed to this team. Ed is a very talented director. His vision and choices are unique and specific and he is extremely passionate about the art and craft of filmmaking. He is always striving to make the best film possible, while at the same time, open to creative collaboration. He allows his actors to morph into their characters without pressure and is relentless in getting the best performances possible.”

“I think it’s only natural to surround oneself with collaborators whom you love and trust. Lee and Aaron are two of my closest friends, and as a team our strengths fill in the gaps of each other’s weaknesses,” says Gass-Donnelly.

The Casting

Peter Stormare as Walter

Consistent with Gass-Donnelly’s generally subversive approach to filmmaking, he wanted his casting choices to challenge any viewer assumptions about the characters in the film.

“It was important to me to create an eclectic cast,” he says. “I didn’t want to fall into obvious traps of casting people who were too outwardly perfect for the roles. I wanted to embrace contradiction within the casting palette so as to leave a sense of mystery about the characters.”

Gass-Donnelly and his team had to look outside of their circle to find an actor to inhabit the role of Walter. They enlisted the help of veteran casting director Ellen Parks (*Grey Gardens*, *Sideways*, *Election*) in a broad search of actors from all over the world. The result of the search was the casting of legendary international film and stage star Peter Stormare. A Swedish actor who is famed for having been discovered at the Swedish Royal Dramatic Theatre by no less than Ingmar Bergman, Stormare came to notoriety in North America for his roles in films such as *Fargo*, *8mm*, *The Big Lebowski*, and *Minority Report* – in which he played memorably violent characters.

Producer Lee Kim comments, “Much of Peter’s work in the past has seen him in the ‘villain’ role, but after watching his performance in *Dancer in the Dark* we were immediately sold on his ability to show the vulnerability that was crucial for the character.”

Stormare’s ability to play both ends of the emotional spectrum and be both a kind, yet potentially violent man, was exactly what was required for the role of Walter. Stormare also brought a great deal of cinematic iconography to the part that imbued it with additional layers of meaning.

Comments Poole, “The audience expectation brings a lot to the part. When you think of the some of the characters he’s portrayed that are now permanently embedded in our cultural imagination - particularly his character in *Fargo* - you expect him to be playing an unhinged, violent individual. Walter is mostly not that - he is a good man - and yet he has this huge anger within him. So the audience expectation of Peter is both accurate and inaccurate - which makes for great tension around the character.”

“Peter is unrecognizable as Walter,” adds Gass Donnelly. “Even his own wife has trouble recognizing him. Something about the glasses and thick moustache truly transform his face. By casting against type, we can’t solely rely on previous notions about the actor or his usual roles. And in a movie where we are ultimately trying to solve a murder, I think that really adds to the tension and mystery.”

Stormare joined the cast after being impressed by the script as well as by Gass-Donnelly’s work on *This Beautiful City*.

“When I watched *This Beautiful City*, I felt I was seeing actors who were being given license to contribute and given real direction,” says Stormare. “The performances in the film were outstanding and that gives you confidence to put yourself in the hands of a director you haven’t worked with before.”

The actor was also intrigued by the nuances he found in the role, “I think Walter saw a lot of injustices in the Mennonite society he grew up in. Some people could do things and the law could never reach them - that’s where his anger comes from,” comments Stormare. “So he became a cop. But this ultimately spurs his anger as he grows to understand that some people can get away with murder and other people are sent to jail for shoplifting. Walter has a strong spirit for justice, but equal justice for everybody. And it doesn’t really work in the small society that he lives in.”

Stormare’s co-star Jill Hennessy comments, “I think what’s interesting about Walter is that he’s at odds with himself. He’s a beautiful human being, almost angelic, and he hates his own temper, hates his potential for violence. And Peter, though known for playing really violent characters, is an incredibly gentle human being inside a very imposing figure. So in this way he really is the perfect actor to play Walter.”

Aaron Poole as Jim

For the role of Jim, Walter’s partner, Gass-Donnelly had initially envisioned someone closer in age to Walter/Stormare. However, while working on the script with Poole he came to realize that going in another direction might make for a more interesting choice.

“I changed the age because I felt that the population of the film was too heavily weighted towards middle-aged characters, which doesn’t totally reflect the make-up of a town,” says Gass-Donnelly. “Aaron is one of the finest actors in the country and probably the one actor I

know with whom I have such a specific shorthand and mutual trust. The choice to cast him was really a no-brainer.”

While working with Gass-Donnelly on the script, Poole had been having similar thoughts, “I was definitely hoping to be in the movie in some substantial way, and it took some convincing that Jim could be as young as I am, but I felt really strongly that not all young people choose to leave a small town, and it was important to represent that.”

Poole was also intimately connected to the writing and excited by the ambivalent nature of the story. He adds. “I think this script is Ed’s best writing. It’s restrained, atmospheric, it relies on image instead of dialogue, and I was excited about working on something in which there was more implied than settled.”

Martha Plimpton as Sam

The other key figures in Walter’s world are his past and present loves, Rita and Sam, who are equally symbolic of where he’s been and where he’s trying to go as well - as representative of the tension within Walter himself.

“The casting of the roles of Rita and Sam was very critical,” comments producer Kim. “The two characters are so opposite to each other - Rita representing a part of Walter’s past that he is struggling to get over, and Sam representing all that he’s aspiring to be. Jill was a great choice for us because her carefree and unwavering spirit could provide that energy that was crucial for the role of Rita. Conversely, Martha played the perfect Sam. She provided the grounding that Walter was looking for in his quest to change his violent nature. What Martha brought to the role was the love, loyalty and spirituality that would be the foundation by which Walter was building his new life.”

Gass-Donnelly adds, “From the earliest discussion about casting for Sam, Martha Plimpton’s name kept being put forward. I have to admit that I wasn’t familiar with her more recent work. Ellen Parks, my casting director in NY, said that I simply HAD to watch her in the film *Eye of God*. She was right. After seeing Martha’s beaming heart in that film, I was hooked. Sam needed be a bright beacon for Walter, an oasis in the dark, and Martha was able to bring such a wonderful hesitant tenderness to Sam. She and Walter are two characters who are both searching for a connection and take comfort in each other.”

Martha Plimpton was attracted to the project for the opportunity to work closely with Stormare. “Peter is a fascinating guy and a wonderful actor,” she says. “He comes to the role with ideas and a point of view that are completely original. In North America he’s rarely been given the chance to lead a film and I am thrilled that this project does that.”

Like many of the other members of the cast and crew, Plimpton was also struck by the calculated ambiguities in the script which are so rarely possible in mainstream cinema. “The character of Sam interested me because of all the things we don’t know about her. It’s unusual to find a good female character with a little mystery to her. She struck

me as being unusually complicated. She's guileless and simple on the outside, but she has desires underneath that make her fascinating. I liked the fact that I wasn't being asked to play a person who wasn't an obvious prototype of domestic simplicity."

Jill Hennessy as Rita

The role of Rita, Walter's troubled and spirited ex-girlfriend, was offered to Jill Hennessy. "I'd been a fan of Jill's ever since her stint on *Law & Order*, but for whatever reason I didn't realize that she was Canadian," says Gass-Donnelly. "When a mutual friend suggested that she might be open to doing a small Canadian indie film, I called my casting director right away and had her make an offer."

The filmmakers had settled on their location by the time Hennessy was contacted - Listowell, Ontario, a small Mennonite town just outside of Kitchener/Waterloo, where Hennessy had in fact grown up.

"I read the script and thought it was beautifully written, really desolate and spare," says Hennessy. "And it really reflected the way that people speak. It specifically reminded me of the way that people spoke when I lived in this area, when I was about ten to sixteen. It was nice to read something that really was tangibly regional Canadian."

Hennessy found her attraction to the role of Rita was driven by curiosity. "Rita is very conflicted. Something obviously occurred in her life where she became very dependent on drugs and alcohol, and is endlessly attracted to violent men. Yet at a certain point she's just functional enough to say, 'I have to get away from this person because they're out of control.' This all made me curious about her - I wanted to figure out what led her to where she is."

She adds, "She's Walter's ex-girlfriend and I think still misses him, but is clearly scared to go back to him. You don't know what Walter did that terrified her, and the not knowing makes it all the more terrifying."

The balance of the ensemble cast was filled with an incredible array of Toronto-based talents, including Stephen Eric McIntyre as Steve, Ari Cohen as Washington, and an appearance by Jackie Burroughs in the role of Olive. They all combine to create a distinctively dynamic and affecting palette for Gass-Donnelly's direction.

Aesthetic

Whereas the visual aesthetic for Gass Donnelly's previous film was inspired by the streets of Toronto and the photography of Nan Goldin, and driven by a hyper-realist approach, the look of *Small Town Murder Songs* is naturalist, expansive, and derived from its mythic, rural environment.

“Our primary visual reference was *No Country For Old Men*, says Gass-Donnelly. “Brendan (cinematographer Brendan Steacy) is an enormous fan of the Coen brother’s director of cinematography Roger Deacons and his penchant for sparse rural naturalism. Brendan pushed us incessantly to embrace a 2.35:1 aspect ration and shoot on 2-perf 35mm. We were slated to shoot on the Red camera until the very last minute when a miracle presented itself and we made the switch to film (which we all agreed best leant itself to the organic, rural feel of the film). We wanted to capture natural, flat looking landscapes with thick, daunting cloud cover. Luckily, the time of year proved perfect for overcast skies so the film has a brooding visual complexity that is both beautiful and natural. Nothing in the movie feels lit.”

Jill Hennessy adds, “From the beginning, the sense of desolation and isolation that can be felt in this landscape was right in the script. And I really think Brendan and Ed have captured this in the shooting of the film as well – the big sky, the cornfields, the expanses. There’s this feeling of mystery when your neighbours house is acres away and you can’t see into their homes and their lives – and I really think this has been captured in the movie.”

The haunting sense of mystery and danger laying in wait in the quiet, rural landscape lends the movie an undeniably gothic feel rarely rendered in the modern cinema.

The Mennonite Community of Listowel

The film is notably situated in a Mennonite community and was shot in Listowel, Ontario, just outside of Kitchener/Waterloo – an active Mennonite community in which you will regularly see families travelling by horse and buggy along the highway.

“Several of the themes that were emerging when I was writing the script felt like they would be enhanced by placing the hero in a community of pacifists,” comments Gass-Donnelly. “I had recently been inspired by Carlos Reygadas’ film *Silent Light* (set in a Mexican Mennonite colony) and I loved how the setting immersed the audience in a world that was unfamiliar to them.”

And while the story has this backdrop, Gass-Donnelly stresses that it is a backdrop that provides the piece with an underlying tone of morality, but that the film is not specifically about the Mennonite community itself. “Most people are not familiar with the Mennonite faith or the language and customs associated with it,” he says. “But the film isn’t ABOUT Mennonites. The purpose is not to educate the viewer, but rather for them to feel that the hero is a part of a different world governed by a strong set of religious beliefs which has separated itself from the rest of the society. “

Producer Lee Kim adds, “The Mennonite backdrop and the pacifism that this religion embraces, is the perfect juxtaposition to the anger that haunts Walter. His violent past is the reason why he is shunned in his community, and his conscious efforts to re-connect himself provide the conflict that propels us from beginning to end.”

Listowel, Ontario, proved to be the ideal home for the production. "Listowel really was the perfect town for us to be based in," comments Kim, "because it embodied the right balance of Mennonite and modern characteristics. The "downtown" core was commercialized enough to provide those exterior and interior locations we needed, while at the same time you would see a horse and buggy drive by regularly. And the expansive, rural landscapes out here are really amazing - like our own little piece of *Days of Heaven*."

The Soundtrack

The music by Bruce Peninsula that Gass-Donnelly ultimately used in the film, furthers the religious undertones and the unique tonal balance of the modern and the gothic.

"In much the same that I feel STMS is infused with a nostalgic style of filmmaking, the music of Bruce Peninsula is rooted firmly in the spirit of traditional gospel, yet infused and reinvented with a rich, modern, passion," says Gass-Donnelly. "Their vocals embrace the exalted chants and wails of religious fervour, while their music churns like a dervish into a wild, orchestrated chaos."

Bruce Peninsula has been described as 'nearly indescribable.' The sound blends gospel, rock, pop, country and more, and is entirely authentic and unique.

For Gass-Donnelly, the music was the perfect complement to the film and one of its most vital elements, "The religious textures of their sound (especially their arrangement of several traditional songs) were a perfect match for *Small Town Murder Songs*. The music roots us in the world of the film and in our hero's conflict between his job and his faith. I think it is one of the main stylistic elements that audiences will walk away with...in many ways I consider the music to be one of the co-stars of the film."

Ed Gass-Donnelly

An indie filmmaker by definition, Gass-Donnelly's creative instincts have always brought him back to stories that are inherently subversive and that call into question every accepted tenet of the worlds he creates.

Gass-Donnelly brings an eclectic background to his film work, having begun his directing career in the theatre and music videos before making his first feature film. He also hails from some pretty impressive Toronto theatre lineage, as the son of famed Factory Theatre Artistic Director Ken Gass.

It could be argued that Gass-Donnelly's stage roots come to bear in his filmmaking most markedly in his work with his actors. He is known to have an impressive talent for catering his directing style to each individual performer.

Producer Lee Kim says, "Ed has an uncanny ability to gain the trust and respect of his actors in a very short period of time. He gains trust by allowing the actors to make mistakes and try different things. Actors know that if they don't feel good about a take, they can try again until they feel it's right, and as a result will experiment. What often comes from that experimentation is brilliance." "That's why I budget an exorbitant amount of money for film stock," he adds with a smile.

Actor Aaron Poole is well equipped to comment on working with Gass-Donnelly, since he's been directed for stage and screen several times by the director. "The very first day of *Small Town* he picked up from where we left off on TBC. Ed has a unique technique for me where he changes what other people are doing and the space around me to change my performance - and this is something he discovered about me from TBC. This really impressed me. His methodology is different with each actor. Peter, for example, comes from an international theatre career and film career and he was much more direct with Peter, whereas he was more technical with Jill. There was a direction she was following somewhat literally in the script one day and she was amazed when he told her to 'remove his hand with your words.' I know she found an amazing stillness and strength in that."

The Cast

Peter Stormare (Walter) Swedish-born actor/director Peter Stormare has been working non-stop as of late. Stormare recently wrapped production on several feature films including "Janie Jones" with Abigail Breslin, "Henry's Crime" with Keanu Reeves and James Caan, and "Dead Of Night" with Brandon Routh. He can also be seen in: "The Killing Room" with Chloe Sevigny, "Insanitarium" for Screen Gems, and "Horsemen" for Mandate Pictures. He starred opposite Willem Dafoe in "Anamorph" and "Witless Protection" with Larry the Cable Guy released in 2008. Prior to that he starred in "Premonition" with Sandra Bullock, "Unknown", "The Brothers Grimm" opposite Matt Damon, "Constantine" with Keanu Reeves and "Birth" with Nicole Kidman.

Stormare starred as John Abruzzi on the first season of the hit Fox television drama "Prison Break" executive produced by Brett Ratner. He can last be seen on the small screen in a memorable guest appearance on "Entourage" as "Aaron Cohen" as well as on "CSI" and "Monk". Other past television credits include the CBS telefilm "Hitler: The Rise of Evil", "Watching Ellie" and guest appearances on "Joey" and "Seinfeld".

Stormare has consistently worked with exceptional directors throughout his career. He appeared in Penny Marshall's "Awakenings", Steven Spielberg's "Minority Report" and "The Lost World: Jurassic Park", the Coen brothers' "Fargo" and "The Big Lebowski", Joel Schumacher's "8MM" and Michael Bay for "Bad Boys II" and "Armageddon". Other work includes Lars Van Trier's "Dancer in the Dark", Lasse Hallstrom's "Chocolat", Wim Wenders' "Million Dollar Hotel", Jonas Akerlund's "Spun", John Woo's "Windtalkers", and Kevin Donovan's "The Tuxedo". He began his acting career in his native land at the Royal National Theater of Sweden under

the direction of the legendary Ingmar Bergman where he performed leading roles in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Miss Julie*, *King Lear* and *Hamlet*.

Aaron Poole (Jim) A graduate of George Brown Theatre School and with training in the Strasberg and Meisner techniques, Aaron's first break was in an episode of the "X-Files" starring Giovanni Ribisi and Jack Black and Aaron channeled years of preparation into the critical role of... "Bystander"!!!. Instead of quitting while on top, Aaron chose to keep at it: balancing his training with shall-remain-nameless T.V. and film projects; being a young Dad to a new daughter; and delving deeper into the indie film scene. Cliché or not - Aaron was not going to be a bystander much longer.

Residing in Toronto's Yorkville (he has also lived in Kensington, Greektown, Leslieville, Little Portugal, Little India, Forest Hill, Roncesvalles, and Parkdale) he's the proverbial man-about-town. No doubt this had a part in his interest in "This Beautiful City", a film about the cultural clash of the elite and the down-and-out in Toronto's West Queen West fringe. Premiering at TIFF, Aaron not only nailed his cracked-out character, Johnny, to rave reviews but also stepped up as a producer on the project. His daring portrayal of the recovering addict, for which he lost 30 lbs and removed one of his teeth, also garnered him a Genie nomination for Best Actor, a category he shared with Canadian icon Paul Gross and the legendary Christopher Plummer. Poole won the Best Actor ACTRA Award that same year for the role.

Since "This Beautiful City", Aaron has played a recurring role on TMN's "Z.O.S.: Zone of Separation", a role that conflicted with an offer for a supporting role in Atom Egoyan's "Adoration", in which he took a small part. He has also traveled with Egoyan to Armenia to shoot a short experimental film.

Currently, Poole can be seen in "Crash & Burn" on Showcase, and also has a role in the upcoming "Living in Your Car" for TMN.

Martha Plimpton (Sam) has achieved myriad success on stage, screen, and television. Ms. Plimpton made her film debut in Alan J. Pakula's "Rollover". She has gone on to star in over 30 films including "The Goonies", "The Mosquito Coast", "Running on Empty", "Beautiful Girls", "Parenthood", "200 Cigarettes", and "Pecker".

Martha most recently starred opposite Stockard Channing in *Pal Joey* for the Roundabout Theater Company and garnered her third Tony Nomination for the performance as well as a Drama Desk Nomination for Best Featured Actress in a Musical and a Drama League Nomination. In 2008, Plimpton starred in *Top Girls* for the Manhattan Theatre Club opposite Marisa Tomei (Tony Nomination - best featured Actress in a Play, Drama League Nomination) and starred in Lincoln Center Theatre's production of William Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* as "Imogen" to critical acclaim.

In 2007, Plimpton starred with Ethan Hawke, Brian O'Byrne and Billy Crudup in Tom Stoppard's three-play, nine-hour epic, *The Coast of Utopia*, produced by the Lincoln Center Theatre (Drama Desk Award, Outer Critics Circle Award, Tony Award Nomination) and "Helena" in the Public

Theatre's Shakespeare in the Park production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Daniel Sullivan. Other memorable performances include starring opposite Oliver Platt in Conor McPherson's *Shining City* for Manhattan Theatre Club, *False Servant* at Classic Stage Company (Drama League Award Nomination), *Hurleyburly* directed by Scott Ellis, *Hobson's Choice* (Obie Award, Lucille Lortell Nomination), *Sixteen Wounded*, *Second Hand Memory*, and *The Libertine*. As a member of the Steppenwolf Theatre ensemble, she was awarded the National Medal of Arts Award.

Memorable television guest star appearances include "Law & Order: SVU", which garnered Martha an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Guest Actress in a Drama Series, "Grey's Anatomy" and *The Good Wife*. Martha will also be seen in a recurring role in the upcoming HBO series, "How To Make It in America". Ms Plimpton currently resides in New York City.

Jill Hennessy (Rita) hails from Edmonton, Alberta, and began her acting career in Toronto appearing in the feature film "Dead Ringers." She studied improvisational comedy with the famed Second City and also worked with a Toronto-based improv comedy troupe before landing a role in the Broadway-bound production of "The Buddy Holly Story." Once in New York, Hennessy starred in Ron Howard's feature film "The Paper," and her additional film credits include "I Shot Andy Warhol," "Chutney Popcorn," "Most Wanted," "A Smile Like Yours," "Dead Broke," "Row Your Boat," "The Florentine," "Two Ninas," "Autumn in New York," "Exit Wounds," "Love in the Time of Money," "Wild Hogs," and "Lymelife" with Alec Baldwin, Rory and Kieran Culkin which won the International Film Critics Award at last year's Toronto Film Festival.

Television audiences first came to know Hennessy from the years (1993-96) she spent playing Claire Kincaid on the Emmy-winning NBC drama series "Law & Order." She then played Jacqueline Kennedy in the miniseries "Jackie, Ethel, Joan: Women of Camelot." In her first Season of "Crossing Jordan," Hennessy received a People's Choice Award nomination for Best Actress in a Drama Series. She has also received a Golden Satellite Award (Best Performance by an Actress in a Miniseries or a Motion Picture Made for Television) from the International Press Academy for her work in the TNT cable movie "Nuremberg." Most recently Hennessy won a Gracie Award (Lead Actor in a Drama Series) and received a star on the Canada Walk of Fame.

Hennessy recently completed the film *Roadie*, written and directed by Michael Cuesta (L.I.E.) with Ron Eldard and Bobby Cannavale. *Roadie* features Jill playing music from her debut album *Ghost in My Head*. Hennessy will soon be seen on the new HBP series "Luck", starring Dustin Hoffman, written by David Milch and produced and directed by Michael Mann.

Hennessy, her husband, Paolo Mastropietro and their two sons Marco and Gianni, divide their time between their homes in Manhattan and Los Angeles.

Stephen Eric McIntyre (Steve) is an actor/writer/improviser born in Regina, raised in Winnipeg and happily spending altogether too much

time in Toronto. He recently wrapped a short film, "The Inmate" for director Stephan Recksiedler and he reprised his role as "Eddie" the nasty casino manager in APTN's "Cashing In" (season two). Other television roles include "Uzzie" in "Less Than Kind" (CITY), "Mook" on "Falcon Beach" (Global/ABC Family) and about a dozen different cowboys on "Lonesome Dove-The Series". Stephen could recently be found anywhere from Berlin, to Toronto (TIFF) to Whistler representing the Gary Yates feature "High Life" (Union Pictures). In "High Life" Stephen plays the character "Bug" a morphine addict freshly released from prison. This was Stephen's first lead role in a feature film starring along with Timothy Olyphant, Joe Anderson and Rossif Sutherland. Stephen also performs a one man improv comedy show where he partners with members of the audience. He also volunteers this show to communities with at-risk-youth. Writing credits include the plays "Mind of the Iguana", "Sommeil Entre Coupe", "Easter Eggs", "Etienne", "Will Tell", "Time For Food", "Treehouses", "Bothered", "So Far From Eden" and the screenplay "And Then Come Back To Me".

Ari Cohen (Washington) 's select film appearances include, Bruce McDonald's "The Tracey Fragments" with Ellen Page, "Bait" with Jamie Foxx, "For The Moment" with Russell Crowe and Guy Maddin's cult favourite, "Archangel". Numerous leading roles in movies for television include Lorne Michaels in "The Gilda Radner Story" for ABC, and the holiday favourite, "The Man Who Saved Christmas", in which he starred alongside Jason Alexander and Ed Asner for CBS. This past year, he guest starred on "The Border", "Copper", "Living In Your Car", "Defying Gravity", and continued his recurring roll on "Smallville". Other select television credits include a recurring roll on "The L Word", a series regular on "The Tournament" and guest appearances on "Supernatural", "The Days", "The Evidence", "Saved", and "Stargate: Atlantis", among others. An accomplished stage actor, Mr. Cohen has performed in virtually all of Canada's leading theatres and has starred in numerous Canadian and world premieres. He most recently starred in the Canadian premiere of "Frost/Nixon" (Vancouver Playhouse and the Canadian Stage Company), and the Soulpepper Theatre Company revival of "Awake and Sing". Mr. Cohen has been nominated for Gemini, Dora and Jessie awards.

Jackie Burroughs (Olive) is one of Canada's most revered acting talents, with a career that spans five decades. Burroughs has starred in Canadian film classics including "The Grey Fox", "The Dead Zone", and "Last Night", to name but a few.

She is best known as the charming Hetty King from the beloved series "Road to Avonlea", in which she starred in six seasons with actress Sarah Polley. Other television credits include "Lonesome Dove", "The Twilight Zone", "Due South", "Smallville", "The Eleventh Hour", "Made in Canada", and "Slings and Arrows".

Recent film credits include "Fever Pitch", with Drew Barrymore, "The Limb Salesman", "Going the Distance", "The Republic of Love" by director Deepa Mehta, "Rhinoceros Eyes", and "Lost and Delirious".

The Crew

Ed Gass-Donnelly (Writer- Director) is an award-winning Canadian film director and screenwriter. Originally a Toronto theatre director, Ed's first full-length film, "This Beautiful City", was released in 2008 and nominated for four Genies at the 29th Genie Awards and has won numerous awards at various international film festivals.

Ed's award-winning short films (which have played over 100 film festivals worldwide and can be seen across North America on IFC, CBC, Movieola, and Bravo) include "Pink", a vicious and disturbing account of Apartheid South Africa; and "Polished", an award-winning short starring celebrated actors William B. Davis ("The X-Files") and Karyn Dwyer ("Better Than Chocolate", "Superstar").

Ed has also directed music videos for some of his favourite Toronto artists including FemBots, Shad, Kae Sun, A Northern Chorus, Sunparlour Players and Andre Ethier.

Lee Kim (Producer) has been actively involved in the entertainment industry as a producer, director, actor and musician for over 10 years. His foray into producing began in 2006 with the feature film "This Beautiful City" which was nominated for four Genies at the 29th Genie Awards in 2009. He has also produced a number of shorts including "The Message" and "Norm" (starring David Sutcliffe).

Lee has a number of films and TV shows in active development, including "Fricky", written by Richie Mehta ("Amal"). *Small Town Murder Scenes* marks Lee's second film with Ed Gass-Donnelly.

Brendan Steacy (Director of Photography) Brendan recently completed principal photography on the MTV film "Made, The Movie" with director Samir Rehem. Brendan has worked on a wide range of diverse projects, including the Sci-Fi channel cable feature, "Sand Serpents" with director Jeff Renfroe, the TV pilot "Sold", the feature film "Harm's Way" and the docu-drama "The Underground". Brendan short film credits are numerous and include the "The Answer Key", which was nominated for a Genie Award, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and was awarded the Kodak Award for Best Short Film Cinematography at the Worldwide Short Film Festival.

Brendan's commercial and music video work is hip, contemporary and visual. He recently won Best Music Video Cinematography at this year's 2010 CSC Awards for Julian Plenti, in addition to his 2009 CSC Award for his stunning images on the Shelby Lynne video. Brendan was also nominated for three MMVA awards for Best Cinematography for his work on videos for "Belly" by Theory of a Deadman and Skye Sweetnam. His work on the Worldwide Short Film Festival and War Child campaigns have garnered him multiple Marketing, Bessie and Cannes Lions awards.

Rachel Ford (Production Designer) designs both costumes and environments. Her production design credits include “Boundless”, “Outset” and “Chasing Aces”. She has designed costumes for both stage and screen including “Smart Woman Survival Guide”, “Design Rivals”, “The House”, and “Bounded Pairs”. Her stage credits include *The Bible* and *Romeo & Juliet Remixed*, which garnered her a Dora Award Nomination for Outstanding Costume Design. Ford has also assisted costume designer Laura Montgomery on the films “Puck Hogs” and “Cooper’s Camera.”

Laura Montgomery (Costume Designer) works for film, television and theatre. Her design for award-winning films showcases her skilled eye for colour, texture and style. Her extensive knowledge of contemporary, vintage and period clothing, married with a flair for creative storytelling, has made her work in demand amongst cutting-edge productions.

Laura is an honours graduate of the University of Toronto in Literature and European Studies. While at U of T, she studied stage and costume design under Astrid Jansen and designed and built theatrical costumes for Shakespeare’s “Pericles” and “The Fiddler on the Roof”. Laura continued her studies at Ryerson University where she won the G. Raymond Chang award for “Best Achievement in Production Design and Scenography”. After completing her education, Laura continued to design for theatre, later expanding into film and television. Drawing inspiration from fine art, architecture and international design, she brings enthusiasm and passion to every project.

Laura Montgomery’s film and television credits include “Textuality” (Eric McCormack, Jason Lewis, Carly Pope), “When Moses Woke” (Gemini Award Winner for Best Direction in a Performing Arts Program), “Coopers’ Camera” (TIFF Official Selection 2008), “El Otro Lado del Pasillo” (L.A. Method Fest winner for Best Short Film), “Puck Hogs”, “The Shrine”, “The Cello”, “The Superstar Hair Challenge II”, and “The Smart Woman Survival Guide”. She has had the honour of being mentored by Delphine White, Martha Mann and Antoinette Messam.

Laura is an acting board member of CAFTCAD, the Canadian Alliance of Film and Television Costume Arts and Design.

Bruce Peninsula (Music)

Dreamt up by Misha Bower (Lead Vocals) and Matt Cully (Guitar, Vocals) in the summer of 2006, Bruce Peninsula has slowly mutated since then, elaborating on the Alan Lomax archives that initially inspired them to embrace influences from all over the world.

Neil Haverty (Guitar, Lead Vocals) Andrew Barker (Bass, Lap Steel) and Steve Mckay (Drums, Percussion) round out the constant core, while a shifting group of co-conspirators contribute to make BP the multi-headed beast that stands before you.

That group includes local luminaries Daniela Gesundheit (Snowblink), Tamara Lindemen (The Weather Station), Amy Learmonth (The Youngest), the lovely Ivy Mairi and OG choir member Kari Peddle. Their in-house sound shaman and occasional drummer Leon Taheny (Final Fantasy, oh bijou) has manned the boards for all of the bands releases.

Former contributors include Taylor Kirk (Timber Timbre), Casey Mecija (ohbijou), Katie Stelmanis & Maya Postepski (Private Life), Isla Craig, Christienne Chesney, Matt Dunn (MV&EE) & Mike Smith (Muskox).

In the summer of 2008, Bruce Peninsula released a 7-inch record that documented their earliest explorations as a band and included reinterpretations of traditional folk repertoire. In Feb. 2009, the band self-released their debut record *A Mountain Is A Mouth* in Canada, garnering numerous fantastic reviews, a spot on many year-end lists and even a long list nomination for the 2009 Polaris Music Prize. *AMIAM* was released in Australia in March 2010 by the Sensory Projects label and plans are being hatched to give the record a proper release in the US, UK and other territories very soon.

Bruce Peninsula have built their reputation playing live and have been fortunate to share the stage with acts like the Great Lake Swimmers, the Acorn, Cuff the Duke, the Sadies, Plants and Animals, ohbijou and Basia Bulat. They have headlined or showcased at SXSW, the Peterborough Folk Festival, Hillside, Halifax Pop Explosion, Sappyfest, Pop Montreal, and have made their way to both coasts of Canada, the sunny parts of the US and all points in between.

2010 has already seen the release of a new split 7" and the band has just started work on *AMIAM's* follow-up. With any luck, those recordings (and many more) will surface before the year is out.

The mighty Bruce is a rock band, a folk troupe, a modernist choir, a collective, an army; songwriters who have learned from the past while looking to the future. Aspects of old Gospel, Appalachian Folk and early Blues mix freely with Pop, Prog, Punk and International influences, creating a collage of contemporary sounds you truly need to hear for yourself.

CAST AND CREW

Directed, Written, Produced By	Ed Gass-Donnelly
Produced By	Lee Kim
Director of Photography	Brendan Steacy, CSC
Production Designer	Rachel Ford
Casting	Jenny Lewis CDC & Sara Kay CDC
Casting Consultant	Ellen Parks
Original Score	Bruce Peninsula
Supervising Sound Editors	JR Fountain / Tyler Whitham

Rita
Ava
Walter
Deacon
Steve
Sam
Jim
Washington
Officer Kevin
Office Michelle
Jenny
Deb
Worker 1
Worker 2
John Ruden
Walter's Father
Mike
Wilson
Olive
Greta
Billy
Cindy
Mrs West
Stunt Steve
Stunt Walter
Stunt Co-Ordinator
Additional Voices

Production Manager
Production Manager (Prep)
Production Coordinators

Assistant Production Coordinator
Production Accountant
Script Supervisor
Unit Publicity
Still Photographers
Story Editor
Additional Casting

Co-Production Designer
Art Directors

Art Department Assistant
Costume Designer

Jill Hennessy
Amy Rutherford
Peter Stormare
Vladimir Bondarenko
Stephen Eric McIntyre
Martha Plimpton
Aaron Poole
Ari Cohen
Trent McMullen
Erin Brandenburg
Kat Germain
Jessica Clement
Andrew Penner
Alan Penner
John Penner
Herm Dick
Mark Snowden
Timm Zemanek
Jackie Burroughs
Ann Holloway
Stuart Hughes
Alyssa Mariano
Heather Allin
Robert Racki
Joseph Racki
John Stead
Gord Bolan

Peter Harvey
Szonja Jakovits
TJ Alston
Erin Brandenburg
Kat Germain
Doug Gillespie
Julia Stan
Suzanne Cheriton
Caitlin Cronenberg
Aaron Poole
Crystal Kramer, CDC

Adam Weir
Brian Garvey
James Banos
Mike Ward
Laura Montgomery

Assistant Costume Designer	Megan Oppenheimer
First Assistant Director (Prep)	Bruce Davis
Second Assistant Director (Prep)	Mark McDonald
TAD	Emalee Brandenburg
Hair and Make-Up	Natasha Nikolic
Assistant Make-Up Artist	Brandi Boulet
	Kristin Wayne
	Whitney Sellors
Hair Cut Stylist for Peter Stormare	Jessica Shannon
1st Assistant Camera	Michael Bailey
2nd Assistant Camera	Angelica Bailey
Daily Assistant Camera	Michael Battistone
	Jurek Osterfield
	Michael Nieuwland
Key Grip	Rhys Brisbin
Best Boy Grip	Todd Thompson
Daily Best Boy Grip	Tony Ranieri
Daily Grip	Jack Kenneally
	TJ Richardson
Gaffer	Rob Walsh
Best Boy/Package Truck/Geny Op	Richard Pryce
Daily Best Boy/Package Truck/Geny Op	Kevin Gallant
	Adam Landucci
Daily Electrics	John Cameron
	Simon Hughes
Locations Sound by	Mid Coast Productions
Location Mixer and Sound Recordist	David Ottier
Co-Transportation Coordinators	Tim Brown
	David Rai
	Jason McCormack
Driver	Bruce Holmes
Assistant to P. Stormare	Scott Yamamura
Production Assistants	Josh Squires
	Sarah Benson
Daily PA	James Ledlie
	Brent Jemmett
Set Medic	Brian Hicks
Lifeguards	Nicole Alexander

	Aleshia Denny
Animal Wrangler	Rick Parker
Assistant Animal Wrangler	John Mairs
Craft Services	Geoff Cole
Special Effects	Sean Wakfer
Locations Manager	Fermin Balado
1st AD	Michael Tassie
2nd AD	Garfield Russell
Additional Score	Andrew Penner
Editor	Ed Gass-Donnelly
Sound Editing and Design by Sound Dogs Toronto	
Additional Sound Editing	Nelson Ferreira
Dialogue Editor	Tyler Whitham
Sound Effects Editor	JR Fountain
First Assistant Sound Editor	Dashen Naidoo
Front End Services provided by Deluxe Postproduction - Toronto	
Dailies Colorist	Ryan Ruskay
Telecine Sync Operator	Debra Filippi
Project Manager	John Bardswich
Manager of Dailies Operations	Gary Brown
Technical Resources Manager	Mark Thorp
Vice President, Sales	Diane Cuthbert
Digital Intermediate Services provided by Deluxe Postproduction - Toronto	
Digital Intermediate Colourist	Drake Conrad
Digital Intermediate Producer	Peter Armstrong
Digital Intermediate Project Manager	Lee Hughes
Digital Intermediate Editor	Dave Muscat
Digital Intermediate Assistant Editor	Kevin Downer
Digital Opticals	Eric Myles
Scan/Record Supervisor	Nick Paulozza
Scanning/Recording	Tom Mayclim
	Trevor Pickard
Dust Busting	Meghan Werner
	Melissa Espina
Audio Services provided by Deluxe Postproduction Services - Toronto	
Sound Re-Recording Mixers	Keith Elliott
	Jason Perreira

Foley Artist	John Elliot
Foley Recordists	Dave Yonson
	Matthew McKenzie
Project Manager, Re-Recording Operations	Michael Patterson
For Movie Central	Julie Di Cresce
For The Movie Network	Kathleen Meek
Legal Services	Gigi Morin, Duncan Morin LLP David Shivak, Ross & McBride LLP
Accountant	Kay and Warburton, CA
Catering	All-Occasions Catering Diana Sweets
Clearances	Eastern Script Service Inc.
Film Stock	Fuji Film Canada
Insurers	Unionville Insurance
Payroll Services	EP Canada
Completion Guranors	Film Finances Canada
Interim Financing	Aver Media, LLP
ACTRA Steward	Barbara Larose
Accommodations provided by	Country Inn - Listowel, Ontario King Hotel - Palmerston, Ontario
	CL Martin
Picture Cars	Picture Cars North
Production Vehicles	Jamieson Car and Truck Rental

Small Town Murder Songs is lensed by
Brendan Stacey, Kinosmith Inc will
distribute in Canada. The film is
produced in participation with Telefilm
Canada, TMN, Movie Central, and
provincial and federal tax credits.

MUSIC

"AS LONG AS I LIVE"

Written & Performed by Bruce Peninsula
Produced by Leon Laheny & Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula

"ANTIOCH 277"

Music by F.C. Wood
Words by Samuel Medley

Performed at Henagar-Union Sacred Harp Convention
Produced by Matt Hinton & Steven Lance
Ledbetter
Published by Awake Productions

"ROSIE"
Traditional
Arranged & Performed by Bruce Peninsula
Produced by Leon Laheny & Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula

"CRABAPPLES"
Written & Performed by Bruce Peninsula
Produced by Leon Laheny & Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula

"SHUTTERS"
Written & Performed by Bruce Peninsula
Produced by Leon Laheny & Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula

"BITTY BABY"
Written & Performed by Bruce Peninsula
Produced by Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula

"HERE COMES THE COMET"
Written & Performed by Mark Revell
Published by JRT Music, BMI SACEM

"FREE TO BE LOUD"
Written & Performed by Damon Criswell
Published by SI Publishing (SOCAN)

"LIFT EM UP/JACK CAN I RIDE"
Written By Washington Phillips
Arranged & Performed by Bruce Peninsula
Produced by Leon Laheny & Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula

"STEAMROLLER"
Written & Performed by Bruce Peninsula

Produced by Leon Laheny & Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula

"SATISFIED"

Arranged & Performed by Bruce Peninsula
Produced by Leon Laheny & Bruce Peninsula
Published by Bruce Peninsula