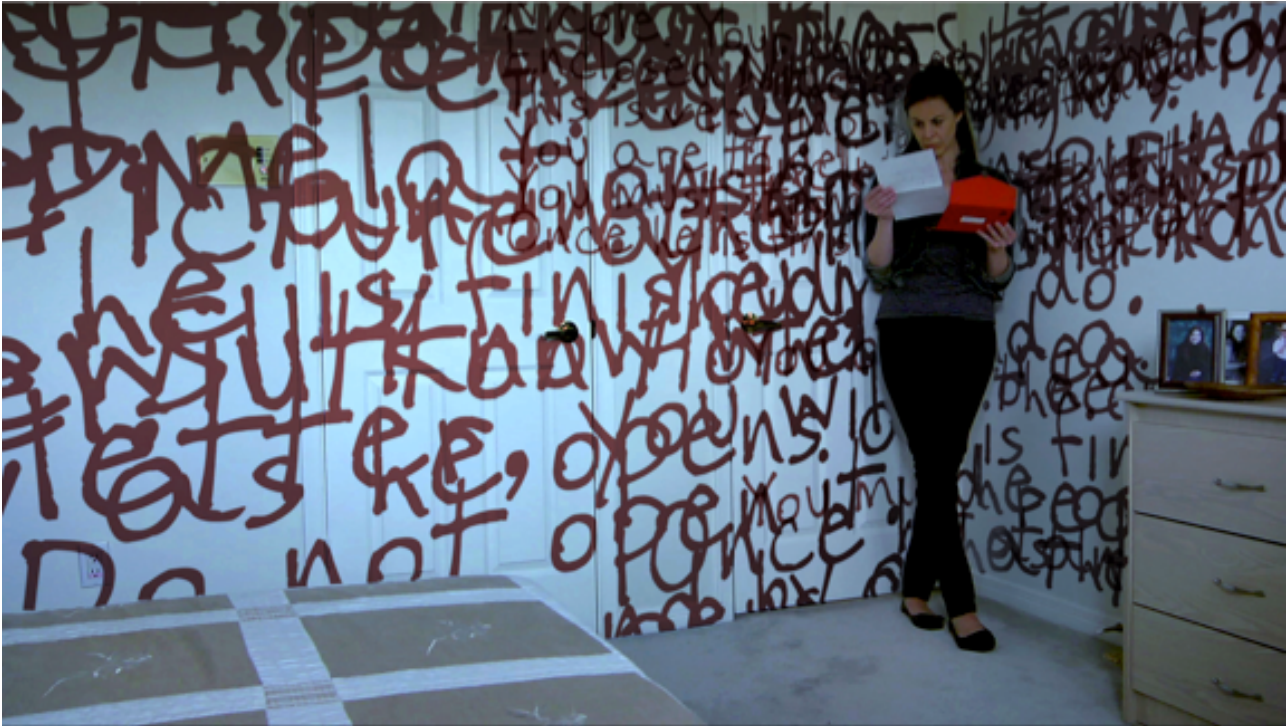


# BLOOD PRESSURE

A film by Sean Garrity

Canada - 2012 - 95 min - HD - 16/9 - Dolby 5.1 Surround - English

World premiere in Busan IFF 2012



## \* Logline

Nicole, 41, begins a long relationship with an anonymous letterwriter, who sends her letters that change her life, but ultimately threaten everything that has meaning for her.

## \* Synopsis

Nicole, 41, is a pharmacist with a husband and two teenage kids, who is at a point in her life when she is asking if 'this is it,' or whether there's something more.

One day she gets a letter from an anonymous Observer who knows her daily habits, and her potential, intimately. He has a plan for her, if she is interested. The letter contains a green card that she should place in her window, if she wishes to pursue the mysterious relationship. If not, she should throw the letter away, and she will never hear from the Observer again.

After a few days of internal debate, she puts the card in the window and begins a long relationship with the elusive Observer, who puts her on a program that starts by changing her life, but ultimately threatens everything that has meaning for her.

Based on the short story by Bill Fugler "Killing Someone".

## \* Director's short profile

Sean Garrity lives in Winnipeg. He studied film production and theory at York University in Toronto and continued his studies at the Instituto de Arte Cinematográfico de Avellaneda in Buenos Aires. His debut feature, *Inertia (01)*, won the award for Best Canadian First Feature Film at Toronto International Film Festival. His other films include *Lucid (05)*, *Zooey & Adam (09)*, and *My Awkward Sexual Adventure (12)*.

## \* Cast

Michelle Giroux	Nicole Trestman
Judah Katz	Michael Trestman
Jonas Chernick	Darryl Saunders
Jake Epstein	Josh Trestman
Tatiana Maslany	Kat Trestman
Catherine Disher	Glenda
Kristian Bruun	Stu
Anthony Ulc	Archie
Kara Wooten	Gun Club Instructor

## \* Crew

Sean Garrity	Director / Producer / Editor / Writer
Matthew Miller	Producer / Production Management
Bill Fugler	Original Story
Ben Lichty	Cinematography
Graham Caswell	Production Design
Zoe Mapp	Sound Design
Charlie Finlay	Original Score
Firuz Daud	Visual Effects

## \* The lead actors bios

**Michelle Giroux** (Nicole) has a long history of Shakespearian theatre. A mainstay at the Shakespeare festival in Stratford, she also has a long list of television credits. *BLOOD PRESSURE* marks her feature film debut.

**Judah Katz** (Michael) has been a mainstay of Canadian television programming since the early 80s. An award-winning performer, Judah's feature films include David Cronenberg's *CRASH* and opposite Kevin Spacey in *CASINO JACK*.

**Tatiana Maslany** (Kat) has been awarded at Sundance, the Toronto International Film Festival and around the world for her well crafted, profound performances. Most recently in *VOW*, but also in *EASTERN PROMISES*, *VIOLET & DAISY* and *GROWN UP MOVIE STAR*, among many many others, Tatiana showcases her ability to bring a role to life. She is the lead in a massive BBC TV show that is about to launch in the UK and USA called "Orphan Black."  
<http://www.bbcamerica.com/orphan-black/>

**Jake Epstein** (Josh) rose to international fame through his lead role on the *DEGRASSI* television series. While known for his film work, in movies such as *CHARLIE BARTLETT*, Jake has increasingly been drawn to the stage. At the moment he is playing *SPIDERMAN* on Broadway.

**Jonas Chernick** (Darryl) is an award-winning actor, and frequent collaborator with Sean Garrity, having done four feature films together, in addition to his numerous hours of television.

### \* Director's statement

There is a moment in all of our lives when we ask ourselves "is this all there is?"

It's a moment when a door, that we didn't know was there, opens onto a different, possible life. Another life. Most of us are too scared to walk through that door, but we are all intrigued by where it might lead us.

That we are tempted to join the circus, fly into the desert at night, or follow instructions from a mysterious stranger that lead us into unknown intrigues, says something about the lives we live and the communities we have built to live them in.



Shooting **BLOOD PRESSURE** in Richmond Hill – a suburb north of Toronto – I was struck by the interplay of my characters and the suburb. I was struck by the profundity of the suburb as metaphor for a superstructure, into which we try and make our lives fit.

These places are crafted to protect us from the city, and from each other. There is a prescribed lifestyle inherent in the structure of a suburb that is meant to anticipate our every need, to alleviate anxieties prompted by uncertainty, and surround us with comforting curved lines of bays and crescents, the familiar green of manicured lawns and the hypnotic drone of lawnmowers singing in harmony.

They surround us so completely, that we need a map to find our way out. A map to a different life.

**BLOOD PRESSURE** is the story of a woman who receives that map in the mail one day.

Using a bare-bones, improvised approach I call 'Solo Cinema,' I shot my third feature, **ZOOEY & ADAM** in 2009, and I have further refined this methodology for **BLOOD PRESSURE**.

Having made three budgeted features with full crews, full tech complement, and all the lawyers, bonds, insurance people and union demands that come along with that, I was very interested in stripping it all away to allow time for meaningful collaboration with the actors, and time for them to focus on their performances in an intimate, low-pressure setting.

I am very proud of the result: remarkably intimate performances and raw emotional authenticity. I feel there are filmgoers who are ready to trade in commercial lighting, CGI babies, and wooden performances by superstar actors for something authentic: a sincere emotional experience at the cinema.

This is what I set out to create with **BLOOD PRESSURE**.

## \* Filmmaker biography

The press has referred to Sean Garrity's work as "possessing a dark, twisted beauty" (Janet Smith, *Georgia Strait*) and has compared his work to that of David Cronenberg (*Globe and Mail*) and even Luis Buñuel (*Steve Palopoli, San Jose MetroActive*).

His first feature film, *INerTia*, was awarded "Best First Feature" at the 2001 Toronto International Film Festival, and netted him "Best Director" at the 2001 FilmCan Festival. The *Globe & Mail* named him one of three "Canadian Filmmakers to Watch" in 2002 and *Northern Life* announced "Sean Garrity is the new wave of Canadian cinema."

His second feature film, *Lucid*, was one of the Top Ten Most Popular Canadian Films at the 2005 Vancouver International Film Festival, where it also won the CityTV award for best Western Canadian Feature, it was an Audience Award pick at Cinefest, and was an official selection at more than 25 film festivals around the world, including Shanghai, Mannheim, Singapore and Toronto.

His third feature, *Zooey & Adam* was shot entirely without crew or budget; a one-man film. It was awarded Best Experimental Film at the Pollygrind festival in Las Vegas, and nominated at the Vancouver International Film Festival for the CanWest award for Best Canadian Feature Film. It enjoyed a successful festival and theatrical release across Canada, and the critical response, so far, has been the best of Sean's career.

Sean's fourth feature *My Awkward Sexual Adventure* – premiered at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival, played South America's only A-List film festival, Mar Del Plata, and won the Public Choice Award at the 2012 Calgary International Film Festival.

His fifth feature, *Blood Pressure*, one of only six Canadian films selected for the prestigious Busan International Film Festival, where it is singled out as one of Screen International's 10 Hot Films, will premiere there in October of 2012.

Both films are slated for 2013 theatrical releases.

In 2008, he was given a jury prize at the Brussels International Short Film Festival for his film *ReOrder*. In 2006, he was given the Special Jury Prize by the Don Haig jury at Toronto's Hot Docs Film Festival. The cash award is presented to a filmmaker whose work is not only outstanding, but has also bridged the documentary and fiction genres.

After spending years backpacking through Asia and South America, Sean returned to Winnipeg to begin a career as a filmmaker and musician in 1997, quickly creating award-winning music videos for Winnipeg artists including The Wyrld Sisters, Mark Reeves and Richard Moody. He also completed a number of documentaries, and award-winning short films. All nine of Sean's short films have international distributors and been sold to television around the world.

He first studied film production and theory at Toronto's York University and continued his studies at the Instituto de Arte Cinematografico de Avellaneda in Buenos Aires.

Sean also works as a bass player, having appeared on half a dozen CDs, and performs live most weekends in Winnipeg, where he lives.

## \* Selected Filmography

"Zoey & Adam" 2009

Feature film on HD

Produced by Bedbugs Films

Official selection 2009 Atlantic, Vancouver, Calgary, Las Vegas and San Francisco Film Festivals

"Best Experimental Film" Las Vegas Pollygrind Film Festival

Distributed in Canada by Kinosmith

Director / Writer / Editor / Producer

"ReOrder" 2007

14 minute fiction film on 35mm

Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films

Official Selection: Toronto International, Vancouver International, Brussels, Boston, London

Awarded Jury Special Mention at the Brussels Short Film Festival

Sold for Broadcast to Canal +, CBC, Movieola, Air Canada

Director / Writer / Editor / Producer

"Rules" 2006

8 minute fiction film on 35mm

Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films

Official Selection: Taormina BNL Film Festival / Vancouver International Film Festival

Director / Writer / Editor / Producer

"Lucid" 2005

Feature film on 35mm

Produced by Bedbugs Films

Official Selection: Toronto International Film Festival, Shanghai, Singapore, Mannheim, Sao Paulo

Winner of the CITY TV AWARD at the 2005 Vancouver International Film Festival

Audience Award shortlist at the Cinefest and Vancouver Film Festivals

Distributed in Canada by Mongrel Media, Internationally by America Video Films S.A.

Director / Writer / Producer

"Pictures of the Interior" 2004

5 minute experimental film on 35mm

Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films

Official selection at film festivals in Canada, South Korea and Egypt

Sold for Broadcast to CBC

Director / Writer / Editor / Narrator / Producer

"Bridge" 2003

5 minute experimental film on 35mm

Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films

Official selection 2004 Vancouver International Film Festival, 2005 Antimatter, 2005

FilmExchange

Director / Writer / Editor / Narrator / Producer

"Inertia" 2001

Feature film on 35mm

Produced by Indian Snack Box Films

"Best First Feature" 2001 Toronto International Film Festival

"Best Director" FilmCan 2001

Distributed by Mongrel Media  
Sold for Broadcast to Movie Central, TMN, Super Ecran, City TV, Showcase, Air Canada  
Director / Writer / Editor

"Buenos Aires Souvenir" 2001

6 minute fiction on 35mm

Produced by Cheeky wee Monkey Films

Official Selection: Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival / Vancouver International Film Festival

Distributed in Western Europe by Premiere Films, in Canada by Ouat Media

Sold for Broadcast to CBC, ARTE (Germany, France) and RTP (Portugal), Air Canada

Director / Writer / Editor / Camera / Producer

zoey & adam press

"Demonstrates how a great story can really juice a film." Four stars!  
Susan G. Cole, NOW Magazine

"Bold, raw and unforgettable. A gritty, fearless, emotionally devastating experience"  
Sam Hagenlocher, The Uniter

"Gripping... The opening ten minutes of this film are a harrowing brush with evil."  
Aaron Graham, Uptown

"An unabashedly serious film dealing with truly adult issues... Brave and Thought Provoking...  
gives the viewer the sense that real lives are being lived, not just acted"  
James Adams, The Globe and Mail

"Raw, Authentic, Emotionally Intense"  
-Lindsey Ward, Toronto Sun

"extraordinarily taut, tense and raw...a new guerilla film-making"  
Sean Francis Condon, msn.com

"Absolute authenticity... explores the grey area between fiction and documentary"  
Eric Shlapack, San Francisco Examiner

"Fascinating... biting realism accented by improvised dialogue and Garrity's technique of  
surprising his actors with plot developments. ... Admirable in its fearlessness and its  
technique."  
Kieran Grant, Eye Weekly

Inertia press

"This won the Best Canadian First Film at the Toronto International Film Festival last  
September... and it's easy to see why." "Great acting and a sharp visual sense"  
-Exclaim!

"...makes Sex and the City look like pay-cable romantic Nerf Ball."  
-Austin Chronicle

"A deliciously dark comedy... Inertia is a terrific example of structured improvisation... A superb  
debut"  
- Vue Weekly

"Strikingly original"  
-Ken Eisner, Variety

Lucid press

"Delivers a jolt to the psyche"  
Peter Howell, Toronto Star

"A stunningly original piece of work"  
Reel Film Reviews

"Superb"  
David Schmeichel, Winnipeg Sun

"Sean Garrity is the new wave of Canadian cinema."  
Northern Life

"There are scenes in Lucid that transcend the confines of a 'cool twist story' and capture a truly haunting, even spiritual surrealism that recalls the master of the form, Luis Buñuel."  
Steve Palopoli, Metroactive, San Jose



**\* Press quotes**

**"A thriller driven by characters and human emotions, as opposed to mindless action"**

*Screen International*

**"Most of the film's best qualities are understated, but that shouldn't mean that it gets underestimated. Where so many thrillers use their generic trappings as an excuse to trot out familiar clichés, Blood Pressure gives the impression that it's discovering its true potential right along with its heroine."**

*Adam Nayman, The Globe & Mail*

**"The audience is pulled in, waiting for the next contact, urged on with quick cuts and staccato bongos - a little '60s spy-flick cliché, but fun... Blood Pressure shows that Garrity is a director to watch."**

*Linda Barnard, Toronto Star*

**"BLOOD PRESSURE is an Intimate, Must See Thriller"**

*Marina Antunes, Quiet Earth*

**"A triumphant double-edged examination of empowerment"**

*Scott A. Gray, Exclaim!*



world sales  
**alpha violet**

14 rue Soleillet, BL 64, 75020 Paris France T +33 | 47 97 39 84 info@alphaviolet.com

[www.alphaviolet.com](http://www.alphaviolet.com)