

micro\_scope



# WHITEWASH

Directed by  
**Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais**

Written by  
**Marc Tulin and  
Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais**

Starring  
**Thomas Haden Church  
Marc Labrèche**

Produced by  
**Luc Déry and Kim McCraw**

## TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

<u>Public Schedule</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Venue</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> Screening	Friday April 19, 2013	8:30 PM	SVA2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Screening	Sunday April 21, 2013	1:00 PM	AV72
3 <sup>rd</sup> Screening	Saturday April 27, 2013	7:00 PM	AV72

  

<u>Press &amp; Industry Schedule</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Venue</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> Press Screening	Monday April 22, 2013	10:00 AM	CCC5

**Marketing/Publicity Contact**  
*required viewing*

(212) 206.0118

Steven Raphael: [sterapha@aol.com](mailto:sterapha@aol.com)

Denise Sinelov : [assistant@requiredviewing.net](mailto:assistant@requiredviewing.net)

**Sales Contact**

*Entertainment One Films International*

(416) 646.6447

Charlotte Mickie: [cmickie@entonegroup.com](mailto:cmickie@entonegroup.com)

## **synopsis**

On a drunken night, Bruce Landry runs over a man with a tiny yellow snowplow. After burying the body, he wakes up deep in the snow-covered forest unaware of where he is. Set in the snowy winter of Northern Quebec, *Whitewash* is a darkly comedic drama that follows a man's imprisonment in the forest and his quest for survival, redemption and sanity.

## cast

Bruce Landry  
Paul Blackburn

Thomas HADEN CHURCH  
Marc LABRÈCHE

## crew

Directed by	Emanuel HOSS-DESMARAIS
Written by	Marc TULIN, Emanuel HOSS-DESMARAIS
Produced by	Luc DÉRY, Kim McCRAW
Casting	Margery SIMKIN Lucie ROBITAILLE
Director of photography	André TURPIN
Production designer	Emmanuel FRÉCHETTE
Costume designer	Myriam HOSS-DESMARAIS
1 <sup>st</sup> assistant director	Pascal ELISSALDE
Makeup	Kathryn CASALT
Hair stylist	Denis PARENT
Sound recording	Pierre BERTRAND
Editor	Arthur TARNOWSKI
Sound designer	Olivier CALVERT
Original music	Serge NAKAUCHI PELLETIER
Sound mixer	Bernard GARIÉPY STROBL
Line producer	François REID
Postproduction supervisor	Erik DANIEL
Script consultant	Valérie BEAUGRAND-CHAMPAGNE
Production	micro_scope
Canadian distribution	Les Films Christal
International distribution	eOne Entertainment

## director's biography

### *Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais*

Since 2001, Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais has directed hundreds of commercials, including several award-winners at festivals in Cannes, New York, London and Toronto. Emanuel won the CRÉA (Quebec's major advertising award) for best director in 2004, 2007 and 2008, as well as being nominated in 2005.

Before becoming a director, Emanuel was an actor and editor, and he continues to act. Notably, he appeared in *The Day After Tomorrow* in 2004.



Emanuel has directed and produced three short films, including *Marius Borodine*, which won the Jury's Pick at the Fantasia Festival in 2010, the Audience Award for Best Quebec Short at the Images en vues Festival (2010), and a nomination for the Genie Award for Best Short Film (2011). *Marius Borodine* also made the list of TIFF's Canada's Top Ten Best Short Films.

Emanuel is currently developing *Birthmarked*, a new feature film produced by Item 7. *Whitewash* is his first feature, co-written with Marc Tulin and produced by micro\_scope. The film stars actor Thomas Haden Church and famous Quebec comedian Marc Labrèche.

## **director's filmography**

*Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais*

### **Whitewash**

2013 | feature | 91 min. | 35 mm | micro\_scope

Written by Marc Tulin

### **Marius Borodine**

2010 | short | 20 minutes | 35 mm | Written by Marc Tulin and Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais

- Jury's Pick, Fantasia Festival 2010
- Audience Award, Best Quebec Short, Festival Images en vues 2010
- Canada's Top Ten Short Films, Toronto International Film Festival 2010
- Nominated for Best Canadian Short Film, Genie Awards 2011

### **Table 13**

2003 | short | 10 minutes | 16mm | Written by Marc Tulin

### **L'amour parallèle**

1997 | short | 8 minutes | 16 mm

## conversation between

### **Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais and Kim Nguyen** (director of *War Witch*)

**So lets pretend you haven't made your film yet, you're heading to the elevator, and a producer with loads of cash walks in with you. Give us your elevator pitch for the film.**

Right, I'm sure that happens all the time. Okay, here it goes: It's the story of a drunken man who kills someone with his snowplow in the midst of a violent snowstorm and escapes deep into the forest. He ends up hiding in the woods for most of the winter, depending on the shelter of his snowplow for survival. It's a drama with a fine dose of dark-comedy about a poor man overwhelmed with guilt who ends up being the prisoner of the weapon of his crime. Let's just say that's the three floors up version!

**One thing that always scares me when I near the first day of photography in any film, is to set the tone and hold it all the way to the last day of the shoot, and then keep the tone coherent all through the editing. I find that one of the most unique things about your film is its mood and tone, its mixture of drama, suspense, humour and irony. How did you determine the mood and the tone of the film, was it an evolving process or did you stick to it right from the start?**

Finding the tone of the film was the most fun part of the process for me. On a short film, *Marius Borodine*, I had just directed (written by Marc Tulin), it had been a clear decision to blur the boundaries between absurd and touching. As for *Whitewash*, we decided to keep exploring the idea of a unique tone. And the producers were very supportive of our writing process. When in the same room, Marc and I spend most of our time giggling and this obviously tainted the script; but we still wanted to develop a strong emotional attachment with this slightly sad but complex character. After that, setting the tone definitely became an evolving process, and I just kept following this one specific instinct the whole time. So a scene could evolve through working with the actors and the key collaborators during the shoot and all the way into post-production. It's as if everybody just got it and was having fun in our skewed world. Thomas and I would talk about the character and the story, but we never questioned the tone. We just kept repeating to ourselves: "This is a drama with some elements of a psychological thriller (but some moments are funny and that's OK because they'll just make the desolation stronger)." I guess Thom and I have the same twisted sense of humour.

**It almost seems like there are three main characters in this movie. There's Bruce, there's Paul, and there's... the snowplow. Could you talk to us a little about this triangle?**

The plow is definitely an important character. I liked the idea that this machine, paralyzed by Mother Nature, ends up taking a human form through the eyes of Bruce. And Bruce eventually tries to transfer his guilt over to the plow and even gets to the point where he blames it for what happened. Finally, their relationship evolves as Bruce begins to make sense of and even cope with what happened to Paul. And in a weird way, Bruce and Paul share a similar trajectory. They both have a difficult past and they collide through this tragic event which obviously impacts their fate.

## **And what drew you in this story?**

We were really into doing a story about the decay of a human mind. Early into the process, we were inspired by a quote from Seneca: *Every guilty person is his own hangman*. So our idea was to put a character into a situation where he puts himself on trial for what he did. Using this metaphor, we could relive the character's past as he deals with it in present time.

Even though the main reason for Bruce's descent is his guilt, I was also fascinated with the man versus nature aspect. Farther up north, our winters can get pretty harsh and overpowering, and I felt like translating this to the screen. And on a graphic level, the forest with all its tall vertical trees seemed like the perfect prison for Bruce.

## **How do you relate (if you relate) to Bruce's odyssey and quest?**

Another aspect to Bruce's journey that we elaborated was his relationship with solitude. I'm a very social person - and I'm not sure I would deal very well with extreme solitude - but I was interested in understanding how someone could deal with his problems and his destiny all by himself. Bruce develops a complicated relationship with his isolation. Although the wilderness is intransigent at first, the alienation becomes very soothing as well. Bruce feels he's condemned to return to the plow in the end, but he's quite at peace with this new life that he has learned to appreciate. I don't relate to Bruce's past life and its problems, but I empathize greatly with him. It's sad to see a man spiral downwards; losing your wife to cancer, beginning to drink heavily, etc. But his ultimate quest for redemption leads him to an expected place.

## **How was it working with Thomas Haden Church and Marc Labrèche, two great, but very different actors?**

Thomas Haden Church really gave everything he had for this film. The extreme conditions would have been physically demanding for a Canadian actor who's used to them... and Thom is from Texas... But more than that, he was totally invested from the beginning in exploring all the different psychological aspects of Bruce's past and downfall. Seeing as the whole film was about him, it became very important for me to understand what Thom was thinking at all times. And he worked so hard at analysing all the motivations of the character to make sure he himself was comfortable with what was going on. Let's just say we communicated a lot, and I think that enriched the film. And he's obviously a very funny guy. One time, I decided to load up a full mag of film and leave him alone in his plow (with the assistant cameraman right outside the window) so he could improvise. Some hilarious stuff came out of it. But in the last take, it permitted him to go into a much more dramatic and interesting territory.

Thom was also great at bringing Marc Labrèche into our world. I've always been a huge fan of Marc's work in French, but he is much better known as a TV actor than for cinema. We knew that it would be challenging for him to join the creative process very late - he arrived about three quarters of the way into the shoot - and in English, his second language. But we spent a lot of time laughing and discussing around a table in a very collaborative way. Marc is a very instinctive actor, and although we would talk about his character for hours, he would always just turn around to me and say: "Ok, let's just try it! We have to dive in!" He had a great spontaneity and so much willingness to just try different things.

## **What was the biggest challenge while filming?**

Mother Nature. We wanted the natural elements to be overbearing and menacing on screen. But unfortunately, we had a really wimpy winter with very little snow during our shoot last year. So we worked really hard at trying to figure out how to get as much snow as possible into our scenes. In the end, the on-set SFX crew and the VFX post-production teams came to the rescue and gave the film the look we originally had in mind. But let's just say that at times, we had only enough fake snow for what was exactly in the shot. So we could not pan 2 degrees left or right or it would feel like summer...

## **So you shot this project on film? What a luxury! Why did you choose that medium?**

We wanted *Whitewash* to feel like a western with “tuques” (wool hat in French Canadian). And although I do believe that we can now achieve that digitally, we ended up making the decision to shoot in 35 mm so we could have a wider range of textures in the highlights. Our tests showed that film would capture the subtleties in the different shades of snow, and that was important to us. It was thrilling to work with a great DP (and a friend) like André Turpin (*Incendies*) whose work will actually be featured this year at Tribeca in the Cinematographers in Focus program. We had worked together on numerous television commercials before, but it was fun to collaborate intensively on a feature. Emmanuel Fréchette (*War Witch*, *Monsieur Lazhar*), the very talented production designer, André and myself went through a lot of references to find the gritty look we wanted. I quickly realized that we needed to create an evolving ring of dirt around the plow that would take over the nature like an oil spill. Once we found our specific colour palette, we tested all the aspect ratios in exterior camera tests. André and I really considered 1.33:1, but we ended up admitting we had to shoot *Whitewash* in a 2.39:1 ratio. The idea to make some kind of a western really followed us into post-production. The editor Arthur Tarnowski (*The Trotsky*) – also a long time friend and collaborator – found some very cool music that worked perfectly. Serge Nakauchi Pelletier, the composer, really understood this idea and created a wonderful score that we are super happy with.

## writer's biography

### *Marc Tulin*

From television to movies, from Montreal-based newsrooms to major international organizations, Marc Tulin has used his talents as a writer in French and English and in many types of writing, building parallel careers in news and fiction.

He launched his career in the CBC newsroom, leaving in 1998 for an internship as a writer in the office of the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan. He then accepted a position as a communications agent at the United Nations in New York.

In 2002, he moved to Paris as a publisher for the OECD, where he oversaw the content of the organization's English-language publications. Since returning to Montreal in 2004, he has divided his time between fact and fiction. While he continues to work in communications, he is now devoting more and more of his energy to writing short stories and film scripts.



In 2005, one of his short stories won an award presented by the CBC and the Quebec Writers' Federation Short Story Competition. The story was also published in the literary magazine *Maisonneuve*. He wrote two short films, *Table 13* and *Marius Borodine*. The latter was named one of Canada's Top Ten Short Films at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2010 and received a Genie nomination in 2011. Marc also worked on the second season of the television series *Les Parent*.

His first feature, *Whitewash*, stars Thomas Haden Church and Marc Labrèche and will be released in Quebec in 2013. The film is produced by micro\_scope and directed by Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais, the same creative partner with whom Marc is working on a second feature, *Birthmarked*, to be produced by Item 7.

Marc Tulin holds three university degrees: a B.Sc. in biology from Université de Montréal, a B.A. in journalism from Concordia University and an MBA from McGill University.

## actors' biographies

### Thomas Haden Church

*Bruce Landry*

Academy Award nominee Thomas Haden Church most recently appeared in acclaimed film-maker Cameron Crowe's family "dramedy" *We Bought A Zoo*, in 2012. Church starred opposite Matt Damon and Scarlett Johansson. He also was seen in William Friedkin's critically acclaimed crime thriller *Killer Joe* which premiered at the Venice Film Festival in 2011. The film also starred Matthew McConauey, Emile Hirsh, Juno Temple and Gina Gershon, who played Church's wife in the film.



In 2010, Church was seen in Sony Screen Gems' *Easy A*, a comedy co-starring opposite Emma Stone, Amanda Bynes, Lisa Kudrow, Stanley Tucci, Penn Badgley and Patrica Clarkson. The film was directed by Will Gluck and premiered at the Toronto Film Festival. *Easy A* was a critical and box office success both domestically and internationally.

Church gained world-wide appreciation for starring as the villain Sandman aka Flint Marko in the third installment of Sony Picture franchise *Spider-Man 3* which remains 2007's largest box-office success.

Church also starred opposite Dennis Quaid and Sarah Jessica Parker in the Miramax art-house film *Smart People* that year. He also co-starred with Elisabeth Shue in the independent feature *Don McKay* which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2009. Church won an Emmy Award and received a Golden Globe and a Screen Actors Guild nomination for his role as Tom Harte opposite the legendary Robert Duvall in the critically acclaimed and ratings success western epic *Broken Trail* directed by Walter Hill, which premiered on AMC/American Movie Classics.

In 2006, Church utilized his unique voice in two voice-over roles; first as a cow in Dreamworks' *Over the Hedge* and then as the crow, Brooks, in the remake of the classic, *Charlotte's Web* released by Paramount Pictures.

In 2004, Church starred opposite Paul Giamatti in Alexander Payne's critically acclaimed film *Sideways*. He earned an Academy Award nomination for his role as Jack. The Fox Searchlight Pictures' release premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and went on to win numerous awards in 2004 and 2005, including a Golden Globe for Best Comedy Picture, Broadcast Film Critics award for Best Picture, a Screen Actors Guild Award for Best Ensemble Cast and six Independent Spirit Awards. Church was also honored as Best Supporting Actor by the Broadcast Film Critics and the Independent Spirit Awards.

Thomas Haden Church made his feature film debut in the legendary film *Tombstone* in 1993. His performance is hardly noteworthy, save for the way that he was riddled with bullets at the

O.K. corral. Church first gained prominence for his role as the bucket-headed mechanic Lowell Mather on the long-running NBC series *Wings*. He is also known for his lead role in the FOX series *Ned and Stacey* in which he starred opposite Debra Messing as the self-righteous Ned Dorsey. In 1997, TIME Magazine proclaimed that “Ned Dorsey is one of the six reasons to watch television.”

In addition, Church co-wrote and directed the film *Rolling Kansas* which premiered as an official selection to the Sundance Film Festival in 2003.

## Marc Labrèche

*Paul Blackburn*

Marc Labrèche is a famous actor, comedian, writer, host and a versatile personality on the Quebec cultural scene. He launched his acting career in 1979, when he was 18, in a French-language stage production of *Harold and Maude* at Montreal's Théâtre du Rideau Vert. He has since performed in more than 20 plays, including both repertory and new works, hosted the Genie Awards in 1993, hosted several Just For Laughs galas, and created his personal vision of *Frankenstein* as a solo play (1992), with co-writer and director Richard Gohier.



In 1994, Robert Lepage asked him to perform a revival of Lepage's solo show, *Les Aiguilles et l'Opium*; the new production ran for two full years, in both English and French, in Europe, the United States and Japan. He will revive the play once again, under Lepage's direction, for a worldwide tour starting in September 2013.

He has also starred on television as an actor in *La Petite Vie* (1993-1999), and as the host of a daily satirical news show, *La Fin du Monde est à 7 Heures* (1997-2000). Over the next three years, he hosted *Le Grand Blond avec un Show Sournois* (2000-2003), a wild and outrageous late-night talk show. He then worked on *Le Coeur a ses Raisons* (2005-2007), a kitschy parody of American soaps, as both a member of the creative team and an actor in four key roles. Until April 2011, he hosted, co-developed and played several characters in *3,600 Secondes d'Extase* on Radio-Canada television. The weekly variety show was inspired by current affairs in the social, political and arts worlds. Since September 2012, he has been the co-developer, director and co-star in *Les Bobos*, a satire of hipster life in Montreal.

Marc has also enjoyed a productive film career, with starring roles in a dozen films by such directors as Yves Simoneau (*Dans le ventre du dragon*), Roger Cantin (*Matusalem I & II, La vengeance de la femme en noire, L'assassin jouait du trombone*), Pierre Houle (*Monica la mitraille*), André Forcier (*Les États-Unis d'Albert*) and Charles Binamé (*Le coeur au poing*). In 2007, he played the lead in Denys Arcand's feature film *L'Âge des Ténèbres*.

In *Whitewash*, he plays Paul Blackburn alongside actor Thomas Haden Church. The film is the first fictional feature by director Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais. It is produced by micro\_scope.

## the production company

micro\_scope is an independent production company based in Montreal, Canada. Founded by producer **Luc Déry** in 2002, and joined by partner Kim McCraw in 2004, the company's main objective is the development and production of original, inventive and accessible feature films. Two of their most recent films, *Monsieur Lazhar* and *Incendies*, were nominated for Academy Awards in the Best Foreign Language Film category, grossed respectively \$6M and \$7M dollars at the domestic box office, and sold in more than 50 countries around the world.

It's latest production, *Inch'Allah*, the second feature film by Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette (*The Fight*), is a Canada-France coproduction shot in Jordan. The film had its world premiere at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival in the *Special Presentations* category and also screened at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Berlinale where it won the FIPRESCI Award for Best Film of the Panorama section, as well as a Special Mention from the Ecumenical Jury. The film, which stars Evelyne Brochu, Sabrina Ouazani, Yousef Sweid, Sivan Levy and Carlo Brandt, was released theatrically in Canada, France, Switzerland and the Benelux, as well as in 8 other territories.

*Monsieur Lazhar*, the fourth feature film from Philippe Falardeau, was nominated at the 84<sup>th</sup> edition of the Oscars in the Best Foreign Language Film category. It had it's world premiere at the Locarno International Film Festival on the Piazza Grande where it won the Audience Award and the Variety Piazza Grande Award. The film since won more than 20 international awards, including one for Best Canadian Film at the Toronto Film Festival, the Art Cinema Award at the Hambourg Filmfest, Best Script and FIPRESCI International Critics Award at the Valladolid Film Festival and the Audience Awards at the Rotterdam, Copenhagen and Sydney Film Festivals. The film has also received 6 awards at the Canadian Genies Awards and 7 at the Quebec Jutras and was screened at the Sundance Film Festival and at SXSW.

The world premiere of *En terrains connus*, Stéphane Lafleur's latest feature, took place at the Berlin Film Festival in 2011, in the *Forum* section where it won the Ecumenical Jury Award. *En terrains connus* was also screened in several film festivals such as Jeonju, Shangaï, Durban, Melbourne, Motovun (Croatia) and Monterrey in Mexico. The film won the Best Film Award at the Los Angeles Film Festival, the Grand Jury Prize in the New Talent Competition at the Taipei Film Festival and the Best Actress Award at the Vladivostok Film Festival.

In 2010, micro\_scope released *Incendies* by director Denis Villeneuve. Adapted from Wajdi Mouawad's stage play, the film stars Lubna Azabal, Mélissa Désormeaux-Poulin, Maxim Gaudette and Rémy Girard. After premiering at the Venice Film Festival where it won the Venice Days Best Film Award, *Incendies* was invited in more than fifty film festivals around the world including Telluride, Namur (Audience Award), Warsaw (Grand Prix Award), Abu Dhabi (Best Actress for Lubna Azabal), Valladolid (Best Script, Audience Award and Young Jury Award), Pusan, Taipei, Thessaloniki, Rotterdam (Audience Award), Sundance and SXSW. Distributed by Sony Pictures Classics in the United States, where it grossed more than 2M\$ at the US box-office, *Incendies* was sold in more than 50 countries and was nominated in the Best Foreign Language Film category at the 83<sup>rd</sup> Oscar ceremony, as well as in the BAFTAs and the Césars.

In 2008, Philippe Falardeau's third feature, ***C'est pas moi, je le jure!*** (*It's Not Me, I Swear!*), is released in Canada. Based on a novel by Bruno Hébert, the film stars Antoine L'Écuyer, Suzanne Clément, and Daniel Brière. Following its premiere at the Toronto Film Festival (*Special Presentations*), it was shown at the Berlinale in the Generation section where it won the Crystal Bear and the Deutsche Kinderhilfswerk Grand Prix for Best Feature Film.

In 2007 micro\_scope released ***Continental, un film sans fusil*** (*Continental, A Film Without Guns*), the first feature film by Stéphane Lafleur. It premiered at the prestigious Venice International Film Festival, in the Venice Days section, and was also selected in numerous festivals around the world, such as Thessaloniki, Göteborg, Rotterdam and the AFI Film Festival in Los Angeles. *Continental* also made its mark at the Toronto International Film Festival where it won the Citytv Award for Best First Canadian Feature. It was also awarded the Bayard d'Or for the Best Film at the Namur International Francophone Film Festival and the Borsos Award for Best New Canadian Feature Film at the Whistler Film Festival. In March 2008, the film won four Jutra Awards for Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor (Réal Bossé).

***Congorama*** was released theatrically in Canada in October 2006. Philippe Falardeau's second feature stars Olivier Gourmet (winner of the 2002 Cannes Festival Best Actor prize for its role in *The Son*, by the Dardenne brothers) and Paul Ahmarani. The film is a co-production with Belgium and France. *Congorama* premiered at the Cannes Festival in May as the closing film of the Director's Fortnight. The film was a *Special Presentations* at the Toronto International Film Festival and also screened in several international festivals like San Francisco, New Directors / New Films at MoMA, Pusan, Göteborg and Halifax where it won the Best Canadian Film Award. At the 2007 Quebec Jutra Awards, the film won five awards including Best Film, Best Director and Best Screenplay.

micro\_scope first solo production, ***Familia*** was directed by Louise Archambault and was released in September 2005. The film participated at the Locarno Film Festival's International Competition and opened the Canada First section at the Toronto Film Festival where it won the Citytv Award for Best Canadian First Feature. *Familia* also screened in many other international festivals like Göteborg, Sao Paulo and Hong Kong and was released in France and in the United States.

In its first year of existence, micro\_scope participated in two co-production projects: ***A problem with fear*** from Gary Burns, director of *Waydowntown*, and Bertrand Bonello's ***Tiresia***, a collaboration with French company *Haut et court*. *A problem with fear* opened the Perspective Canada section at the 2003 Toronto Film Festival and was selected for the Berlin Film Festival, while *Tiresia* was part of the official competition in Cannes 2003.

The feature film ***Whitewash*** by Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais will be premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival next April in the *Spotlight* section. The film stars Academy Award nominee Thomas Haden Church as well as Marc Labrèche. *Whitewash* is distributed in Quebec by Les Films Christal and internationally by eOne Entertainment.

micro\_scope is now working on the post-production of ***Gabrielle***, the second feature film of director Louise Archambault, and on ***Tricotées serrées***, a documentary by Annie St-Pierre