

THE PUPPET MAN



A SACRED BONES PRODUCTION

A FILM BY JACQUELINE CASTEL

FEATURING MUSIC BY JOHN CARPENTER





LOGLINE

A supernatural killer stalks a young woman and her friends in a seedy, neon-lit dive bar. Featuring Master of Horror John Carpenter.

SYNOPSIS

THE PUPPET MAN is a short slasher film featuring supermodel Crystal Renn in her acting debut and music by and a cameo from John Carpenter. Based on a childhood character created by artist and lead actor Johnny Scuto, THE PUPPET MAN follows a group of friends who are locked inside an abandoned dive bar and seduced by a killer and his alter ego.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



I've always been drawn to horror films as a means to explore the confrontation between reality and the unknown. Read on a deeper, metaphorical level, this dynamic examines society's simultaneous attraction and rejection of the inexplicable, its struggle to come to terms with that which cannot be explained or accounted for.

Shot in NYC and LA with a mix of artists and close friends on a micro budget, THE PUPPET MAN was inspired by lead actor Johnny Scutto's childhood infatuation with a puppet his father taunted him with when he misbehaved. I met Johnny through the NYC music scene as he was developing an alter ego based on this character – with his shaved eyebrows, wide brimmed black hat, and jumpsuit with the words "Puppet Man" scrawled on the back, I was instantly intrigued and impressed by his authentic, magnetic, and utterly confrontational personality.

So when my exec producer Caleb Braaten proposed the idea of working with John Carpenter on a film project, I called up the Puppet Man and asked him out for coffee. Through a series of midnight hang outs, cryptic phone calls and exquisite corpse inspired email chains, we developed the character for the screen.



“I’M JUST FUCKING WITH YOU.”

We ran the script by John, who agreed to a cameo, and three days later Caleb and I were flying to Los Angeles on Halloween to shoot his scene in the same model station wagon driven by his iconic character Michael Myers. With no time or money for permits, I asked John to meet us on an abandoned street corner in a shady part of the valley. He arrived, chain-smoking, and grilled me, testing me as a director while slipping in obscure ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13 references. I kept my cool, but my anxiety must have registered because he finally paused, broke into a smile, and remarked, “I’m just fucking with you.”

As our cast and crew began to assemble for principal photography in NYC, Crystal Renn was brought to my attention via my producer Greg Eggebeen. While I was initially skeptical of casting a model in the lead role, I was quickly stunned by her fearlessness, dedication, and complete vulnerability on set. I found my dream girl in Crystal, not only as a newly minted actress who could scream on command in sub zero-temperatures, but as a black-clad kindred spirit who was quickly reading the entire cast and crews astrological charts on set.

The stories from this project are endless, from being loaned a shirt by Johnny that had allegedly belonged to Charles Manson for Bradley Bailey’s character of the Bartender, to sound designing the film at David Lynch’s home studio amidst transcendental meditation sessions. THE PUPPET MAN was a wild and profound experience, one I’ll never forget, and one which aligns with my goals as a director to bring the stories from the fringes to a larger audience, brought forth by an army of close alliances and friendships with people that I trust and truly believe in.



FILMMAKER BIOS

JACQUELINE CASTEL

WRITER AND DIRECTOR

Jacqueline Castel is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker, curator, and longtime collaborator with Sacred Bones. Her short films and music videos have screened at SXSW and have premiered online with the New York Times, Interview Magazine, Nowness, and Dazed Digital and deemed her a “Director to Watch” by Fader Magazine. Her work has been commissioned for live events at the Guggenheim, MoMA P.S. 1, and The Creators Project.

CALEB BRAATEN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Caleb Braaten owns and operates Sacred Bones, a NYC-based label with a focus on forward-thinking contemporary music, art, books, and film. In addition to releasing dozens of new independent artists’ output, Sacred Bones has teamed with cult auteurs David Lynch, Jim Jarmusch, and John Carpenter to release their musical work.

GREG EGGBEEN

PRODUCER

Greg Eggebeen is a producer based in New York City. He is currently a Senior Producer at VICE Media. In his spare time, he is a Head Programmer at Spectacle, a non-profit cinema in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.



CAST OF THE PUPPET MAN

CRYSTAL RENN as CHRISTINE

Crystal Renn is a supermodel, accomplished author, and photographer based in New York City. She's been featured in such esteemed campaigns as Dolce & Gabbana, Chanel, Jimmy Choo and Jean Paul Gaultier. **THE PUPPET MAN** is her acting debut.



JOHNNY SCUOTTO as THE PUPPET MAN

Johnny Scuotto is a Brooklyn-based artist and a native New Yorker. The character of the Puppet Man was created philosophically and aesthetically by Johnny. He is the front man of One Prayer One Sin (OPOS) and is currently working on an EP produced by Erin Tonkin, Tony Visconti's Assistant Engineer and protege, and is scheduled to be released in Spring 2016.

BRADLEY BAILEY as THE BARTENDER

Visual & Performance Artist, Actor, Musician



CAST OF THE PUPPET MAN

SUSANNAH SIMPSON as SUSIE

Multidisciplinary Artist in Performance, Poetry, Dance, and Vocalization



JOE CASTLE BAKER as TOMMY

Stand-Up Comedian & Actor

GRANT MAYLAND as FRANK

Artist, DJ, Musician, & Actor





AND FEATURING JOHN CARPENTER AS THE TAXI DRIVER



CREW OF THE PUPPET MAN

written and directed by.....JACQUELINE CASTEL
based on a character by.....JOHNNY SCUOTTO
executive produced by.....CALEB BRAATEN
produced by.....GREG EGGBEEN
music by.....JOHN CARPENTER

director of photography.....JACQUELINE CASTEL
camera operator.....FLETCHER WOLFE
assistant camera.....FRANCES CHEN
SAMANTHA PANGER
gaffer.....SEAN GRADWELL
key grip.....KEVIN YANKOU
sound recordist.....JARRET DEPASQUALE
boom operator.....BRIAN FLOOD

production designer.....ZEV DEANS
art director.....EVA TUSQUETS
costume designer.....JENNI HENSLER
costume assistant.....NICOLE HERNANDEZ
custom tailoring.....ARTHUR ARBIT/CHASING TAILOR
make up.....CHRISTINE CHERBONNIER
make up for Mr. Carpenter.....GINA DEVIVO
hair.....BRITTAN WHITE

editor.....JACQUELINE CASTEL
post production supervisor.....JP CASTEL

sound designer and re-recording mix.....DEAN HURLEY
additional recodist.....JOHN NORTHCRAFT
music supervisor.....PIER HARRISON

unit production manager.....SOOJIN CHANG
associate producer.....PIER HARRISON
BOGDAN APETRI
production assistants.....KATE FLYNN
MELANIE GHAFFARI

poster art and title designer.....ALEXANDER HEIR

extra special thanks to.....SANDY KING

special thanks to

THE CASTEL FAMILY PEGGY EARLE SCOTT BERGER, MARYAM ZADEH, & HAJRADIN KUKA
TONY BORDEN & GREENCARD PICTURES VASHTI WINDISH, SARA VILLARD & WORSHIP VINTAGE
KIER-LA JANISSE ALEX BARTON & ROBERT GUYNN



THE PUPPET MAN

written & directed by **JACQUELINE CASTEL**
based on a character by **JOHNNY SCUOTTO**
exec produced by **CALEB BRAATEN**
produced by **GREG EGGBEEN**

featuring music by **JOHN CARPENTER**

RUNNING TIME: 9 Minutes
ASPECT RATIO: Scope (2.39)
SHOOT FORMAT: RED EPIC
LENSES: Vintage Canon K35 Primes
FINISH FORMAT: 2K ProRes 422 DCP
SOUND FORMAT: 5.1

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