

A Cinema Guild Release



Actress

A film by Robert Greene

86 minutes / DCP / 1.85:1 / Dolby / U.S. / English / Not Rated

Stills available at: www.cinemaguild.com/downloads
www.actressfilm.com

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SYNOPSIS

Brandy Burre had a recurring role on HBO's iconic drama *The Wire* when she got pregnant with the first of her two children. She gave up her career and moved to a small town to raise her new family with her partner, Tim. Things were fine for a while. But when Brandy decides to get back into acting, the foundations of her domestic life prove too fragile for her ambitions and the way she sees herself. As she tries to find balance between being a good mother and her desires for a life she once walked away from, Brandy is forced to make painful choices that will affect her family forever. Using elements of melodrama and cinema vérité, *Actress* is both a present tense portrait of a dying relationship and an exploration of a complicated woman, performing the role of herself, in a complex-yet-familiar story. It's a film about starring in the movie of your life. When a woman performs the roles of mother, wife and actor, what's real? How far will Brandy go to remake her life? *Actress* chronicles what happens when we break the rules.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

By Robert Greene

When I originally came up with the idea to start filming my next door neighbor Brandy Burre, it wasn't to document the dissolution of a marriage or to create the nonfiction/melodrama hybrid that we ended up with. I was a huge fan of *The Wire*, so it was very cool for me to put the camera on my friend who had been on that show. But mostly I had been thinking (and writing published essays) about the role of performance in documentary and I thought it would be an interesting experiment to make a documentary about a person that, as an actor, couldn't help but perform when the camera was on her.

My previous films *Kati With An I* and *Fake It So Real* had touched on this idea of performance in nonfiction, but this was entirely different. I write and talk a lot about pushing the documentary form past the boring stuff we normally see, so exploring the way people perform their social identities through a metaphorical examination of how an actor can't stop performing even if she wanted to was really exciting to me.

The original idea was to call the film *Mother As Actress*, because I knew my friend Brandy wasn't happy in her domestic roles. I thought we could do things like see her perform her wife/mother routines over and over again and that would reveal something about the condition of wildly creative types like Brandy when they become caged housewives. I also knew that Brandy was considering a run at getting back into acting, so I thought there was enough of a narrative hook to pick up the camera and press record.

But with documentaries, magic can sometimes happen. And just like with *Kati With An I*, this "magic" was a heartbreaking turn of events that transformed my act of filming into an actively dramatic process of telling the story of a woman on the verge. It turns out Brandy's alienation was much deeper than I could have imagined and she had some secrets that she wanted to tell. I'll never know for sure if my filming provoked anything inside her, but Brandy needed to make a change in her life and we set off on a year long journey together. *Actress* is the complex fruit of that unbelievably complicated time in both of our lives.

About halfway through filming, we started watching John Cassavetes films together and talking about how he and collaborators like Gena Rowlands would make these intimate, powerful films basically in their own homes. We found deep inspiration in that. Our houses are 20 feet apart. This process has been unbelievably tricky. Her partner Tim has been uniquely supportive of our project through an unbelievably difficult time. It is with pride and pain and hesitation that I can say I truly believe that there will never be another movie quite like what we pulled off. I hope I'm lucky enough to find an audience that feels the same.

**ROBERT GREENE
DIRECTOR**

Robert Greene is a filmmaker and writer. Robert has produced and edited over a dozen award-winning documentaries. His fourth feature, **ACTRESS**, will world premiere at the True/False Film Festival before going on to play Hot Docs and Sarasota, among other festivals. **ACTRESS** will be the closing night film for the inaugural Art of the Real series at the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Robert's previous film, **FAKE IT SO REAL**, was named one of the 15 best films of 2012 by Richard Brody at *The New Yorker* and one of the best documentaries of the year by Roger Ebert. His second film, **KATI WITH AN I**, was nominated for a Gotham Award for "Best Film Not Playing At A Theater Near You" in 2010 and was released in April 2011 to critical acclaim, including receiving a *New York Times* "Critics' Pick." Robert's first feature **OWNING THE WEATHER** was released in 2009 after screening at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

He has edited films as diverse as Douglas Tirola's SXSW-premiering **HEY BARTENDER** and Alex Ross Perry's Sundance-premiering **LISTEN UP PHILIP**, while contributing editing to many more films, including **LENNY COOKE** (Safdie bros.), **HELLAWARE** (Bilandic) and **THE VANQUISHING OF THE WITCH BABA YAGA** (Oreck). He also produced and edited Amanda Rose Wilder's **APPROACHING THE ELEPHANT**. Robert has also written movie reviews and essays on documentary film for outlets such *Sight & Sound*, *Filmmaker Magazine*, Hammer to Nail, Nonfics and Press Play. He is programming a special Cinematic Nonfiction competition at the 2014 Little Rock Film Festival and a weeklong seminar of screenings at Hampshire College in July 2014. Robert will be honored with the Vanguard Award at the 2014 San Francisco DocFest. He was Post-Production Supervisor from 2002 to 2012 for 4th Row Films.

Feature Filmography as Director

ACTRESS (2014)

FAKE IT SO REAL (2012)

KATI WITH AN I (2010)

OWNING THE WEATHER (2009)

**DOUGLAS TIROLA
PRODUCER**

Douglas Tirola has directed three and produced seven documentary films including HBO's **AN OMAR BROADWAY FILM** and the award winning **ALL IN – THE POKER MOVIE**.

AN OMAR BROADWAY FILM was Douglas' first documentary as a director. It screened at the Tribeca Film Festival where it was acquired by HBO Documentary Films. **OWNING THE WEATHER**, which is based on an article from Harper's Magazine, had its world premiere at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15) and was released theatrically. **KATI WITH AN I** follows a teenage girl leading up to her high school graduation. It screened at the DOC NYC Film Festival and was nominated for a Gotham Award. When the film opened in New York City it received a New York Times Critic's Pick. **MAKING THE BOYS** had its world premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival. It also screened at Tribeca, Silverdocs and twenty other festivals. First Run Features released the film theatrically to universal rave reviews, including Critic's Picks from the New York Times, Washington Post, and Los Angeles Times. **FAKE IT SO REAL** explores what happens when the over-the-top theatrics of the wrestling ring collide with the realities of the workingclass South. The film received an Editor's Pick from New York and New Yorker Magazines and opened theatrically in early 2012. **ALL IN - THE POKER MOVIE** explores the worldwide poker phenomenon. It received the Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary at CineVegas and opened theatrically in New York and Los Angeles before rolling out to theaters nationwide.

Douglas' most recent release is **HEY BARTENDER**, which tells the story of the two bartenders trying to achieve their dreams behind the bar. The film had its world premiere at the 2013 SXSW Film Festival and is currently playing in theaters throughout the country.

Douglas is currently directing his next film, a feature documentary about the humor empire, **The National Lampoon**.

Douglas created and served as Executive Producer of MTV's television series **THE X EFFECT**. His screenplay **VICTOR IN DECEMBER**, which he will also direct, was optioned by Oscar nominated producer Bob Balaban. *Victor in December* won a Writer's Guild Award.

Douglas has worked as a screenwriter for Paramount, Universal, Fox, Warner Brothers, Sony, and New Line. Douglas has also worked on the production of many Hollywood movies as a location manager and production coordinator including *Billy Bathgate*, *A League of Their Own*, *Searching for Bobby Fisher* and *Mighty Aphrodite*. He got his start in the film business as a production assistant on the film *When Harry Met Sally*.

As President of 4th Row Films, Doug has created a company that utilizes independent filmmakers to produce award winning branding and marketing films. 4th Row Films has produced award-winning content for over 100 brands and their agencies including American Express, Avon, Coca-Cola, Ford, Hersheys, Absolut, Guinness Hendricks, and the NFL.

**SUSAN BEDUSA
PRODUCER**

Susan is currently Vice President of Development at 4th Row Films where she sets up development and distribution deals with various networks and studios, and collaborates with writers and directors on new ideas for TV and film, working with them from development thru distribution. Over the past 6 years, Susan has produced 7 feature-length documentaries.

An Omar Broadway Film is a real life drama surrounding an inmate at a maximum security prison who smuggles in a video camera, shoots hours of secret footage, and tries to leverage it for an early release. The film premiered at the **Tribeca Film Festival** and had a theatrical run in New York and Los Angeles before it was acquired by **HBO Documentary Films**.

Owning the Weather explores our relationship with weather and our desire to control it through cloud seeding or air conditioners. Based on an article from Harper's Magazine, the film premiered at the prestigious **Full Frame Film Festival** and was released theatrically before being acquired internationally by **IFC**.

Making the Boys explores the legacy and impact of the groundbreaking play *The Boys in the Band*. The film had its World Premiere at the **Berlin International Film Festival**, and was released in theaters across the country, receiving unanimously positive reviews including a **New York Times Critic's Pick**.

Kati with an I is an intimate portrait of a teenage girl in Alabama during the three days leading up to her high school graduation. It premiered at the **DOC NYC Film Festival** and was a nominee for the prestigious **IFP Gotham Awards**. After playing select art house theaters, it was released on digitally and became available on DVD in October 2012.

Fake It So Real dives head first into the world of independent pro wrestling. The film opened in select theaters around the country and was recently named one of the Best Films of 2012 by New Yorker Magazine.

All In – The Poker Movie explores the history, culture and resurgence of the game of Poker. The film won *Best Documentary* at the **Cinevegas Film Festival** and began its theatrical run in New York and Los Angeles before rolling out to 50 theaters nationwide. It premiered on **Showtime Networks** in Summer 2013.

Hey Bartender is the story of the rebirth of the bartender and the comeback of the cocktail. Featuring the world's most renowned bartenders and access to the most exclusive bars in New York with commentary from Graydon Carter, Danny Meyer and Amy Sacco. The film is currently in theaters nationwide. Susan also served as Producer of the television series "**The X Effect**," for **MTV**, which ran on the network for three seasons.

Most recently, Susan optioned the rights to the story and archive of the **National Lampoon**, which will be turned into a feature documentary directed by 4th Row President, Douglas Tirola. She is also in production on another film about a former heavy metal rockstar turned classical composer. Susan is a graduate of Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI where she earned degrees in Journalism and Creative Writing. She graduated from Staples High School in Westport, CT.

Credits

ACTRESS

Starring: Brandy Burr

With: Tim Reinke, Henry Reinke, Stella Reinke

Directed by: Robert Greene

Produced by: Douglas Tirola, Susan Bedusa

Produced, Edited & Cinematography by: Robert Greene

Aider & Abettor: Deanna Davis

Additional Cinematography: Bill Ross, AJ Schnack, Sean Price Williams

Post Production Coordinator: Danielle Rosen

Post Production Supervisor: G. Jesse Martinez

Sound Mix & Design: Andrey Netboy

Additional Recording: Christopher Bowen

Production Assistant: Bennett Elliott

Post Production Services: Chromavision

Additional Services: Time Inc Studios

Poster Design: Laura Baran, Theresa Berens

Website: Theresa Berens, Alexander Khost

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