



BIG MUDDY

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OFFICIAL SELECTION 2014

You can run from a lot of things ...
But your sins ain't one of them.

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BIG MUDDY

UNION PICTURES PRESENTS AN ANGEL ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH AIKEN HEART FILMS PROWLER PICTURES "BIG MUDDY" NADIA LITZ
JUSTIN KELLY DAVID LA HAYE ROSSIE SUTHERLAND HOLLY DEVEAUX ROB VAN MEENEN WITH STEPHEN MCHATTIE AND JAMES LE GROS
CASTING BY CARMEN KOTYK KERRY BARDEN PAUL SCHNEE COSTUME DESIGNER NADIA WILLIAMSON SOUND DESIGNER GLENN EVS
MUSICAL SCORE BY WILLIAM ROWSON EDITED BY FABIOLA CARAZA PRODUCTION DESIGNER JENNIFER MARIE THOMAS CINEMATOGRAPHY BY CRAIG TRUDEAU
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS BOB CROWE WALLY START PRODUCED BY CORAL AIKEN BOB CROWE JEFFERSON MONEO WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY JEFFERSON MONEO

ANGEL ENTERTAINMENT AIKEN HEART FILMS PROWLER PICTURES TELEFILM CANADA THE HAROLD GREENBERG FUND creative SASKATCHEWAN Canada UNION PICTURES

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in association with
AIKEN HEART FILMS & PROWLER PICTURES

BIG MUDDY

"You can run from a lot of things, but your sins ain't one of them."

Written & Directed by:
JEFFERSON MONEO

Produced by:
CORAL AIKEN · BOB CROWE · JEFFERSON MONEO

Executive Producers:
BOB CROWE · WALLY START

Made with the Participation of:
**TELEFILM CANADA
THE HAROLD GREENBERG FUND
SASK FILM
UNION PICTURES**

Running Time: 104 Minutes

World Premiere: Toronto International Film Festival 2014

Publicity: Touchwood PR - Andrea Grau
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LOGLINE

Martha Barlow, a modern day outlaw, must reconcile her dark past after her teenage son commits a horrible crime.

SYNOPSIS

Martha Barlow has been living in seclusion for years with her teenage son, Andy. She has a dark personal history she'd rather not remember and more skeletons in her closet than she'd care to admit. After Andy commits a horrible crime, Martha must face her violent past in order to secure her son's future. To do so, she must ward off a crazed racehorse owner, reconcile with her estranged family, and reunite with Andy's dangerous and long forgotten father.

CAST

NADIA LITZ ... Martha Barlow
JUSTIN KELLY ... Andy Barlow
STEPHEN MCHATTIE ... Stan Barlow
JAMES LE GROS ... Buford Carver
ROSSIF SUTHERLAND ... Tommy Valente
DAVID LA HAYE ... Donovan Fournier
HOLLY DEVEAUX ... June Baker
ROB VAN MEENEN ... Bill Wilson
PHIL GRANGER ... Darryl Jenkins
CHERYL JACK ... Cheryl Jenkins
TRICIA BRAUN ... Peggy Lee O'Connor
RUSSELL BADGER ... Old Man
ALAN BRATT ... Buck Jones
FUZZY ... Fazal Razack
RYLAN ALEXANDER ... Police Officer #1
MARK D. CLAXTON ... Police Officer #2

CREW

Director of Photography
CRAIG TRUDEAU
Production Designer
JENNIFER MARIE THOMAS
Editor
FABIOLA CARAZA
Composer
WILLIAM ROWSON
Sound Design
GLENN ENS
Costume Design
NADIA WILLIAMSON
Hair & Make-up
JESSICA PANETTA



A photograph of Jefferson Moneo, the director, on the set of the film Big Muddy. He is in the foreground, looking intently at a monitor. He has a beard and is wearing a blue plaid shirt over a red and white geometric patterned shirt. A pair of headphones is around his neck. In the background, a woman with long dark hair is also looking at the monitor. The setting appears to be an indoor location with a ceiling fan and a window with blinds.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT - Jefferson Moneo

David Lynch once said that **Sunset Boulevard** was his favorite film because it represented the type of world that he wanted to live in. After making the short films **Big Muddy** and **Going South**, I knew I had found a world that I wanted to live in. This was a world of outlaws, dark secrets, and violent retribution. The setting for this world was a mythological Saskatchewan rooted in the folklore of the province. The character of Martha Barlow is at the center of the **Big Muddy** world.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Big Muddy Badlands in the southwest corner of the province formed the northern end of the "outlaw trail", a remote refuge for infamous characters such as Sam Kelly and the Sundance Kid. Other Old West legends hid out there as well. Lakota medicine man stayed there to avoid retribution from U.S. Forces after the Battle of Little Big Horn. Coincidentally, Sitting Bull was first encountered on Canadian soil at the same spot where the Moneo family settled in Saskatchewan. To this day, there is a monument to Sitting Bull on my family farm. The **Big Muddy** feature, along with the short films, all constitute part of the western legend of Martha Barlow.



Jefferson Moneo, directing
on the set of BIG MUDDY

DIRECTOR Q & A with Jefferson Moneo

How do you see yourself as a director?

I consider myself to be a western filmmaker. I am interested in modern day tales of the West and the people and places in between the stops on a map. My goal as a filmmaker is to make films that represent when I come from both artistically and geographically. I'm from Saskatchewan. As such, I want to tell stories about rural people in extraordinary situations.


What makes your point of view unique?

My relationship to Saskatchewan defines my vision of the world. During my time at Columbia University, I realized that my connection to the prairies is what made my point of view unique. This is not something I always understood. Growing up, I looked outside my home province for inspiration. Now, I feel compelled to tell stories about my home.



Justin Kelly as Andy Barlow





Why was it important to shoot the film set in Saskatchewan?

Most of my ideas are generated with the province in mind. Actually, most of the **Big Muddy** script was written with locations in mind that I already knew and loved. A lot of the locations were on family land in the south of the province. Most people just think of wheat fields when they think of Saskatchewan. That's certainly a big part of the province, but the part I love the most is the south – the Badlands, coulees, rivers, sage brush, bluffs. Real western type stuff.

*What other works influenced **Big Muddy**?*

Big Muddy is influenced by Southern Gothic literature, something I studied extensively as an undergrad English major. Stories such as Flannery O'Connor's **Good Country People** and Joyce Carol Oates' **Where Are You Going? Where Have You Been?** had a profound effect on me. These stories contain a certain rural despair that I find intoxicating. Although written by American authors, I feel an immense connection to these works. In my mind, the rural experience transcends both borders and cultures. With **Big Muddy**, my intention was to make a film that transposed Southern Gothic literature to a contemporary, rural Canadian setting.



Nadia Litz as Martha Barlow

Why did you make the lead of the film a female character?

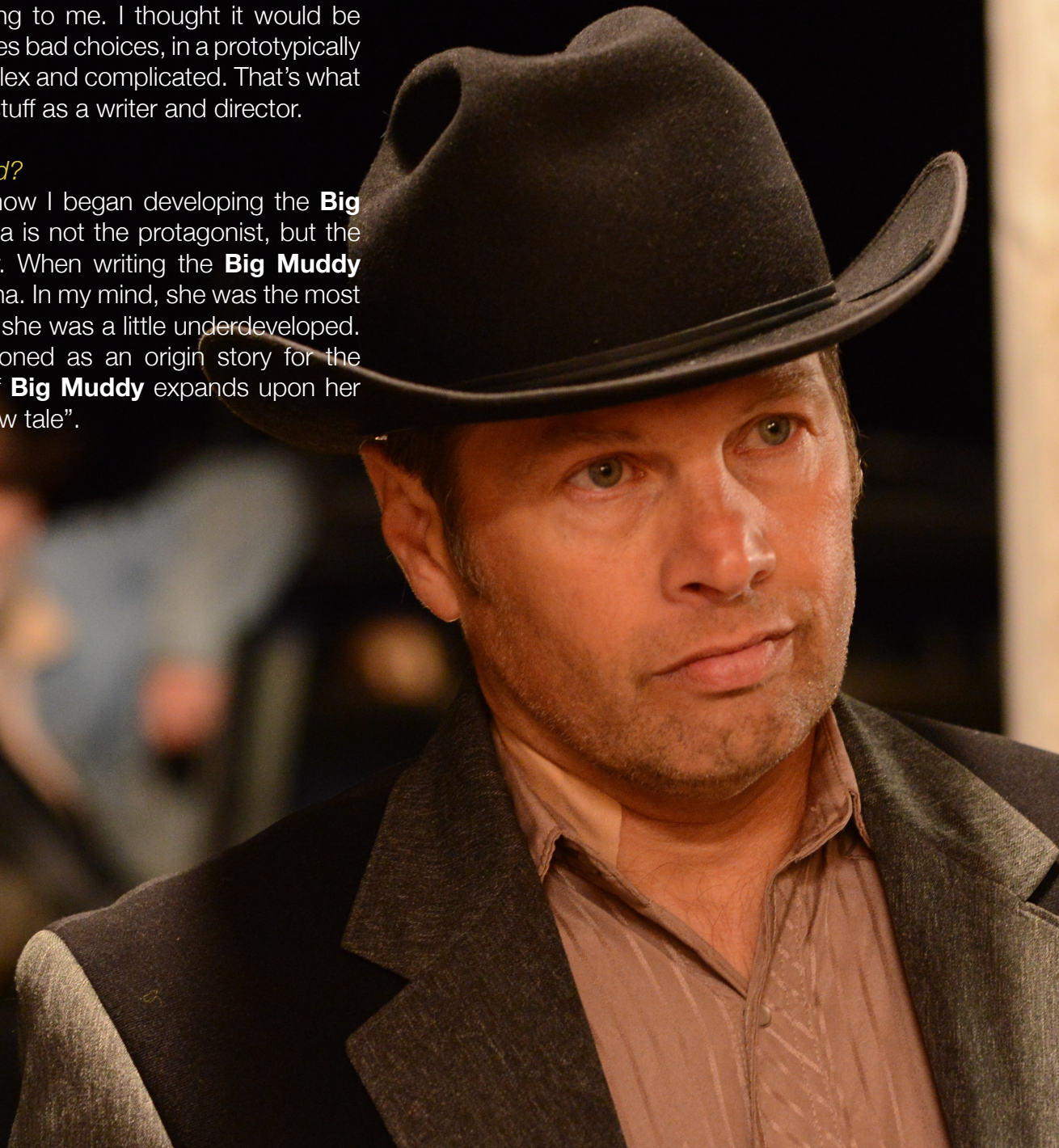
Westerns – and I consider **Big Muddy** a western – typically feature a male protagonist. More often than not these characters are anti-heroes. I'm not sure if I know of many films with a female anti-hero. So that was intriguing to me. I thought it would be interesting to follow a woman, who consistently makes bad choices, in a prototypically male world. Martha's a tough character. She's complex and complicated. That's what I like about her. It's fun to sort through that type of stuff as a writer and director.

How was the character of Martha Barlow developed?

Martha Barlow as modern day outlaw. This was how I began developing the **Big Muddy** world. In the **Big Muddy** short film, Martha is not the protagonist, but the mother of the protagonist, her teenage son Andy. When writing the **Big Muddy** feature, I chose to shift the focus from Andy to Martha. In my mind, she was the most compelling character in the short film, even though she was a little underdeveloped. My thesis film at Columbia, **Going South**, functioned as an origin story for the character of Martha Barlow. The feature version of **Big Muddy** expands upon her character in an attempt to further explore her "outlaw tale".



James Le Gros as Buford Carver



You worked with the same creative team on both of your shorts and this film. How did your team of key creatives contribute to the film?

I've always admired filmmakers who work consistently with a core creative team ie. David Lynch and Jack Fisk, Ingmar Bergman and Sven Nykvist, Martin Scorsese and Thelma Schoonmaker, Federico Fellini and Nino Rota. The work produced by those filmmakers is defined by their relationships with their collaborators. I feel the same way about my work, even though it's only been a couple of shorts and now the feature length version of **Big Muddy**.

My core creative team played a large role in the development of my voice as a filmmaker. I've been making films with DP Craig Trudeau for years. We even formed a punk

band to help raise money for our first super8mm short together called Danceland. We played gigs and dumped all the money into purchasing film stock. Now we're like an old married couple. We argue all the time, but have developed such a keen understanding of each other that we instinctively know what each other wants.

I met Production Designer Jen Thomas while I was living in Toronto. My wife was doing her MA in Film Studies at York University and Jen was a fellow student there. I'm not sure if she was even thinking about a career in production design at the time, but Coral Aiken, one the producers on **Big Muddy** and a very dear

friend of mine, got Jen to design a short film and the rest was history. Coral likes to say that she "discovered" Jen! All I know is that Jen's incredibly talented and full of wonderful ideas. There are a lot of wanna be Jen Thomases out there, but only one original!

My wife Fabiola Caraza has edited a bunch of my films, including **Big Muddy**. I think the performances are very strong in the film and that has a lot to do with Fab's attention to detail. She's always searching for something deeper in an actor's performance. She also has a knack for sorting through all my mistakes and making them look like choices!



JEFFERSON MONEO – BIO

Jefferson Moneo was born and raised in the middle of nowhere on the Canadian plains. As a result, he is interested in stories about the people and places in between the stops on a map. Deeply influenced by Southern Gothic literature, his work deals with dark secrets, personal redemption, and violent retribution. He counts Faulkner, Steinbeck, and Flannery O'Connor as kindred spirits. As a filmmaker, Jeff's work has screened at venues around the world including Slamdance and the Moscow Bienalle. In a rare feat, both films that Jeff directed at Columbia University (Film MFA 2013), **Big Muddy** and **Going South**, screened in competition at the Cannes Film Festival as part of the Cinefondation programme. A true child of the West, he considers himself to be a Son of the Sams – Fuller, Peckinpah, and Shepard.



David La Haye as Donovan Fournier



JEFFERSON MONEO - FILMOGRAPHY

Going South · Producer/Director/Writer

Short dramatic film · HD · 2013

Exhibition: Cinefondation Cannes Film Festival 2013

Here Come The Humans · Creator/Executive Producer

Webseries · HD · 2014

Funded by grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

www.herecomethehumans.com

Big Muddy · Producer/Director

Short dramatic film · HD · 2011

Exhibition: Cinefondation Cannes Film Festival 2011, Moscow Biennale 2011

Cherry Blossom Season · Producer/Director/Writer

Short dramatic film · Super8mm · 2009

Produced with the participation of the National Film Board of Canada

Plastic Bitch · Producer/Director/Writer

Short dramatic film · DV · 2005

Exhibition: World Wide Short Film Festival 2005

Any Niagara · Producer/Director

Short dramatic film · DV · 2004

National Screen Institute of Canada Drama Prize Film

Danceland · Producer/Director

Short dramatic film · Super8mm · 2003

Exhibition: Slamdance 2004, Mill Valley Film Festival 2004

Ladyfingers · Writer/Director

Short dramatic film · 16mm · 2000

Awards: Best Student Director (Nominated) – Leo Awards 2001



Stephen McHattie as Stan Barlow

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



As an award-winning actress from the age of eighteen, Nadia Litz has worked with notable directors such as Jeremy Podeswa (THE FIVE SENSES), Reginald Harkema (MONKEY WARFARE), Daniel Cockburn (YOU ARE HERE), Brad Peyton (EVELYN: THE CUTEST EVIL DEAD GIRL), Andrea Dorfman (LOVE THAT BOY), Fernando Meiralles (BLINDNESS) and Nicolas Winding Refn (FEAR X). For her role in AFTER THE HARVEST with Sam Shepard, she was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award (Gemini) for Best Actress. In 2013 she starred in the critically acclaimed film HOTEL CONGRESS which she also wrote/directed. In late summer 2013 she starred opposite Rossif Sutherland, Stephen McHattie and James Le Gros in Jefferson Moneo's inaugural feature film BIG MUDDY (TIFF 2014). An emerging writer/director, her second feature film THE PEOPLE GARDEN (winner of the audience award at TIFF's 2013 Screenwriter Lab) - begins shooting in Fall 2014.



Justin Kelly plays the lead role of Andy in BIG MUDDY. He can also be seen in the supporting role of Rhett in David Cronenberg's MAPS TO THE STARS. He recently finished shooting LOST & FOUND for Gearshift Films and can be seen in the upcoming feature LOST AFTER DARK for Goldrush Entertainment. Justin has been a series regular on DEGRASSI: THE NEXT GENERATION and THE LATEST BUZZ. He is currently shooting a new series for DHX: OPEN HEART. He also writes, produces and performs in his own short films.



A veteran of over 50 films and over 100 television projects, McHattie's feature performances include the Inquisitor in Darren Aronofsky's THE FOUNTAIN; A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE opposite Viggo Mortensen (dir. David Cronenberg); and SECRETARY opposite Maggie Gyllenhaal (dir. Steven Shainberg). McHattie also starred in PONTYPOOL, a feature directed by Bruce MacDonald, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2008 and earned him a Genie award nomination for Best Lead Actor. Stephen McHattie can also be seen in the Warner Brothers film, THE WATCHMEN, which reunited him with Zach Snyder (director of 300). Some of his latest projects include, WOLVES with Jason Momoa (dir. David Hayter), HAUNTER with Abigail Breslin (dir. Vincenzo Natali), and THE STRAIN conceived by Guillermo Del Toro.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



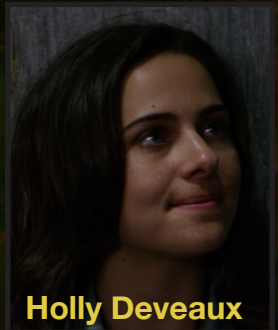
James Le Gros

Since being cast by Gus Van Sant as Matt Dillon's drug addicted cohort in *DRUG STORE COWBOY*, Le Gros has become a long time traveler in both the independent and studio film landscapes. His independent film credits include Stacy Cochran's *MY NEW GUN* opposite Drew Barrymore, Bart Freundlich's *MYTH OF FINGERPRINTS* opposite Julianne Moore, and Tom DiCillo's *LIVING IN OBLIVION*, for which Le Gros was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award. Le Gros' studio film credits include David Fincher's *ZODIAC*, Tony Scott's *ENEMY OF THE STATE*, Oliver Stone's *BORN ON THE 4TH OF JULY*, Cameron Crowe's *SINGLES* and Kathryn Bigelow's *POINT BREAK*. His television credits include his series regular work on David E. Kelley's Emmy Award winning *ALLY MCBEAL*, Showtime's Emmy nominated *SLEEPER CELL* and NBC's *MERCY*. Le Gros costarred in HBO's *MILDERD PEIRCE* opposite Kate Winslet and more recently recurred on HBO's *GIRLS*, ABC's *REVENGE* and FX's *JUSTIFIED*.



David La Haye

David La Haye is a Canadian actor, writer and producer. He is known for his performances in numerous feature films including *UN CRABE DANS LA TÊTE* (2001), *NOUVELLE FRANCE* (2004), *HEAD IN THE CLOUDS* (2004) and *FULL BLAST* (1999). More recently, he produced, wrote and acted in *J'ESPÈRE QUE TU VAS BIEN 2*. Alongside his acting career David manages his own production company, named Aviva Communications, allowing him access to other facets of the television and film industry.



Holly Deveaux

Young audiences may know her best from her leading role as Emma Ruby on *BAXTER*. Deveaux, a rising Canadian star with multiple credits under her belt in film and television just completed shooting the series, *HEMLOCK GROVE*. Her television movie roster includes a 2011 telepic *SILENT WITNESS*, which she appeared in alongside Anne Heche and Dermot Mulroney, and a supporting role in *THE PHANTOM*. Deveaux played a lead role in the feature film *VICTORIA DAY*, which was part of the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. Her television appearances include: *LESS THAN KIND*, CTV's *FLASHPOINT*, *MURDOCH MYSTERIES* and *BREAKOUT KINGS*. Deveaux is no stranger to theatre with a lead role in various productions of *WIZARD OF OZ*, *OKLAHOMA*, *THE STONE BOAT* and *HANK*. Deveaux trained at the Toronto Conservatory of Music, is an adept Alto/Soprano singer, a multi-disciplinary dancer, and enjoys playing guitar.



PRODUCTION COMPANIES



ANGEL ENTERTAINMENT

The award-winning Angel Entertainment is headed by two creative producers with backgrounds in law and finance. Bob Crowe and Wally Start take an active role in all their productions, from concept and development, on set and in the edit suites, right through to delivery and marketing. Angel has a record of working with early-career directors, guiding those productions to accolades in all fields: feature films, dramatic television series, and documentaries. We have an eye for great stories, a knack for creative team-building, and a world-class business affairs team. And we do it all for the love of the craft and the great people with whom we get to work.



AIKEN HEART FILMS

Aiken Heart Films collaborates with a new generation of filmmakers to create exciting and relevant cinema. Helmed by producer Coral Aiken, Aiken Heart Films has screened work internationally notably with two short films selected for competition at the Festival de Cannes in the Cinefondation program. Aiken Heart features an impressive roster of Canadian talent including Geoffrey Pugen, Gloria Kim, Nadia Litz and Jefferson Moneo. Coral Aiken was one of eight producers selected for TIFF studio in 2014.



PROWLER PICTURES

From experimental films to dramatic feature length narrative, Prowler Pictures represents a new generation of Canadian cinema. Prowler has produced films in collaboration with the Canada Council for the Arts, the Sask Arts Board, the National Film Board of Canada, and Telefilm Canada. Whether shooting in far off locations such as Egypt and Thailand, or producing homegrown work on the plains of Saskatchewan, Prowler can be counted on for their cutting edge material.

Rossif Sutherland and Nadia Litz in Big Muddy

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