

A man and a woman are dancing in a disco setting. The man is wearing a light-colored suit and the woman is wearing a light-colored dress. They are illuminated by a warm, golden light from a large, glowing disco ball hanging from the ceiling. A spotlight beam is visible on the right side of the frame, casting a warm glow on the brick wall behind them.

Disco Beats

Written And Directed By **Ken Arquelio**



Logline

Set in Detroit circa 1979: An elderly man tries to convince a jaded disco dance instructor to teach him to dance so he can surprise his wife on their 60th wedding anniversary...in one week.

The Story

DISCO BEATS is a tender exploration of two men at different stages of life who connect through the shared language of dance. LOU, an 80 year old man who's never learned to dance enlists the help of BENNY, a middle-aged disgruntled dance instructor, to teach him to dance so that he can surprise his wife, GLORIA on their 60th wedding anniversary.

Frustrated with his station in life, Benny's fear of a long-term commitment is affecting his relationship with ROSIE, the owner of the dance studio. Over the course of the day, the two men mentor each other, ending with a poignant lesson that Lou shares with Benny giving him a newfound appreciation of life that strengthens his bond with Rosie.

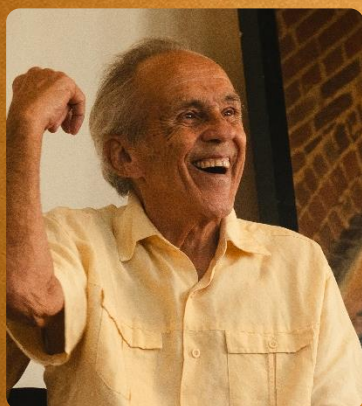


Director's Statement

My favorite uncle passed away holding my hand. He looked me in the eye, smiled, and took his last breath. The moment was painful, yes, but more importantly, it was a gift. A gift, because watching someone die changes you. You recognize how fleeting life is and how important it is to make the most of whatever time you have left, because you never know when it's your time. Before he died, he left me with a life lesson I carry to this day: Enjoy your life. "It's never too late" he'd often say when he decided to try something he never thought of doing when he was younger. DISCO BEATS is a tribute to my uncle and, I hope, a lesson to whoever sees it.

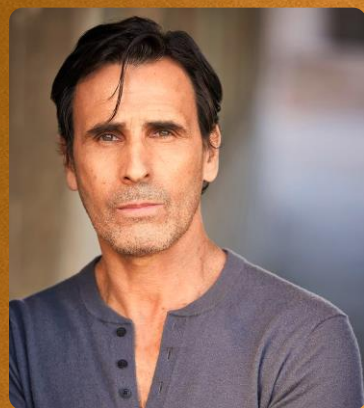
I've been a producer, a writer, and an actor for over 20 years and after writing the script for DISCO BEATS, I decided it was my time to direct a film-my first ("it's never too late", remember?). It is my uncle's story, my lesson, and my honor to share it with you. It will be both nostalgic and heartfelt and it is my hope that as the closing credits roll, you will tap your feet and warm your soul.

Cast Bios



PEPE SERNA (Lou)

Most recently appeared in *FLAMIN' HOT*, directed by *Eva Longoria*, Pepe is a well-respected Mexican-American character actor who has appeared in more than 100 feature films playing opposite *Al Pacino* in *SCARFACE*, *Edward James Olmos* in *AMERICAN ME*, *Kevin Costner* in *SILVERADO*, *Jeff Goldblum* in *THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BONZAI*, and even *Gregory Peck*. In a career surpassing five decades, Pepe's characters have played on both sides of the law -- from drug peddlers to sheriffs and he even played father to *Jennifer Lopez* in two CBS television series. A documentary about his fascinating career as an actor, a motivational speaker and artist called *LIFE IS ART* is currently available on Amazon.



KEN ARQUELIO (Benny)

An actor/writer/producer and owner of Vincero Pictures, Ken was awarded a producing fellowship by the PGA Create program for *DESERT RATS*, a television pilot that he co-created and co-wrote about a used car salesman that crashes the upscale Palm Springs real estate market. He recently played a lead role in *CLOWNSPRIRACY*, a horror film slated for release on YouTube TV in April/2025. He also played a lead role in *A BUTTERFLY VANISHES*, an award winning short film that debuted at the Los Angeles Latino Independent Film Festival (LALIFF). A theatre trained actor, Ken originated the roles of Dean in the world premiere stage productions of *Resurrection of the Ants* and Stan in *Infinite Black Suitcase*.

Cast Bios (CONTINUED)



ELIA CANTU (Rosie)

Elia is an actor and writer. She currently stars as Jada Hunter on **DAYS OF OUR LIVES**. She guest starred in **9-1-1** and has appeared in multiple hit TV shows, including **CRIMINAL MINDS**, **THIS IS US**, **BLACK-ISH**, **MOM** (opposite Allison Janney and Anna Faris), and **BLACK MONDAY** (opposite Don Cheadle and Regina Hall).



SHIREEN CRUTCHFIELD (Maria)

Introduced to the entertainment industry as the lead singer of the R & B group The Good Girls on Motown Records, Shireen has appeared in several television shows such as **NCIS**, **911 LONE STAR**, **JANE THE VIRGIN**, **THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL**, **GOOD TROUBLE**, and **SEINFELD**. She currently stars as Irene, a jazz club owner, in the mini-series **FIRE**. As a successful fashion model, Shireen has worked with notables such as Giorgio Armani, Calvin Klein, Issey Miyaki, and Chanel. In addition to her on camera work, Shireen also works behind the scenes, writing for TV and film, including her award winning short entitled, “Birthday Bash,” which she produced and directed. The proud mother of three, Shireen is also a children’s book author.



CHRISTOPHER CALLEN (Gloria)

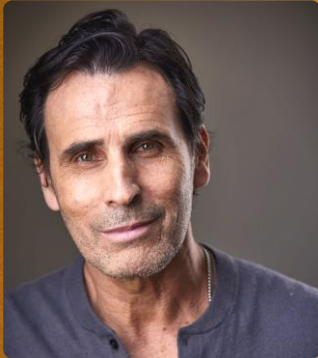
An actress, singer, dancer, writer, artist and human rights activist working in Los Angeles, Christopher (named after the Patron Saint of Travelers) has appeared in roles opposite Johnny Depp, Benicio Del Toro, Treat Williams, Bruce Willis, Ed Asner and John Travolta. Currently she can be seen on streaming platforms opposite Eric Roberts in “Date of Honor”, “NOHA” opposite Stephen Tobolowsky and in the TikTok series “My _Joy”, with over 7 million views! She has also appeared in roles on Broadway -11 of them, including *Lend Me A Tenor*, *Over Here!*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*. TV viewers will recognize her as (Dr. Gail Dexter) **ONE LIFE TO LIVE**, (Ellie O’Brien) **THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS** and (Mrs Callahan) on **BRONX ZOO**. But Christopher is often most revered as the mouthy Circus/ Circus cocktail waitress in Terry Gilliam’s cult classic – **FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS**.



ELISE THURESSON (Didi)

An actress with experience in both film and theater, Elise has appeared in short films such as **CONCEALED FRAGMENTS**, and **STICKY BRAINS**. On stage, her credits include *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *Twelfth Night*. She was also the recipient of the National Youth Arts Award for “Outstanding Lead Performance in a Play”.

Production Team Bios



KEN ARQUELIO (Writer/Director)

DISCO BEATS is Ken's film directorial debut. He is of Puerto Rican descent and is the founder of Vincero Pictures, a film production company based in Palm Springs, CA. He was recently awarded a producing fellowship from the PGA Create Program and NALIP (National Association of Latino Independent Producers) for DESERT RATS, a television pilot that he co-created and co-wrote. He is currently in development for a feature film he wrote and will direct called LEADER OF THE BAND starring Pepe Serna, about three generations of Latino men who meet in the mountains of Idyllwild to bridge a fractured relationship caused by a traumatic event in the grandfather's past.



STEPHANIE BELL (Producer)

A member of the Producers Guild of America, Stephanie is an Emmy nominated and multi-award-winning producer and line producer with over 25 years of experience in film, TV & digital content. Most recently, she produced DESERT RATS for Ken Arquelio. Her films have screened around the world, garnering more than 50 awards, including 14 for "Best Feature". She is the founding partner of two production companies, and has a background in the business & legal affairs, having worked at Paramount Picture, Interscope Communications, and Franchise Pictures. Stephanie is an adjunct professor at College of the Desert in Palm Springs, CA, where she teaches producing and line producing. Before producing Stephanie studied acting with the great director - Mike Nichols, performing off-Broadway and regionally before moving to LA.

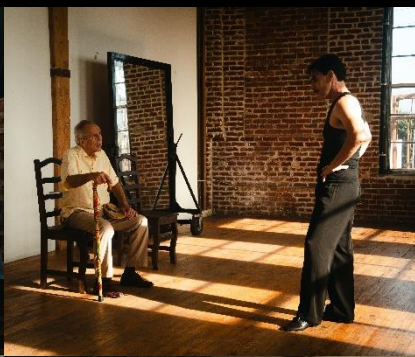


JOEL E. SCHAEFFER (Cinematographer)

With over 15 years of experience in the film and television industry, Joel Schaeffer is a skilled and dedicated Cinematographer with a passion for visual storytelling. He has a strong understanding of the technical and creative aspects of cinematography. He is experienced in various camera systems, such as 16mm & 35mm film acquisition as well as designing custom LUTs for digital color workflows. His background in the camera department and formal education at the American Film Institute (AFI) give him a unique blend of technical camera experience, visual language, and storytelling. Joel has gained a wealth of experience through his work on numerous projects, from short films to feature-length productions. He is known for his attention to detail, problem-solving skills, and ability to work collaboratively with directors and other members of the production team. He is committed to helping bring his client's vision to life and delivering beautiful, engaging, and impactful images that tell a compelling story.



Production Stills





Technical Specifications

- Year of Production: **2024**
- Genre: **Dramedy**
- Running Time: **19:10**
- Country: **USA**
- Language: **English**
- Format: **Digital**
- Ratio: **2.39:1**
- Camera: **Sony FX6**

A woman in a white dress stands with her back to the camera, arms raised in a celebratory gesture. Above her is a large, reflective disco ball. A bright spotlight shines from the bottom right corner, illuminating the scene. The background is dark with some brickwork visible.

Contact Info

**For more information about the film
and inquiries please contact:**

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