

BUSY BEE

Chandra Michaels

Ashley Ross



A FILM BY
Myke Bakich & Chandra Michaels



<https://www.facebook.com/busybeeshortfilm>

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Log line

When a pleasant run in with an old friend quickly turns into an emotional rollercoaster, Colette struggles with whether to hang on or let go of Lisa, a queen bee who's just too busy.

Medium Synopsis

Busy Bee is the story of two old friends colliding at distinctly different phases in their lives. Friendship, womanhood, connection, values and truth are explored in this short narrative.

On a beautiful weekend afternoon, Colette bumps into Lisa, an old friend and former schoolmate. Having lost touch since graduating, they attempt to make plans and rekindle the friendship, but it proves difficult. Lisa is just too busy managing the relationship with her phone to rebuild the one with Colette. Can Colette find the courage to end this unhealthy friendship for good?

Full Synopsis

As the saying goes, people come into your life for either a season, reason or life time. Busy Bee is a film about friendship, connection, priorities and values in our modern day world. It's a story about 2 twenty-something female friends intersecting at distinctly different phases of life, navigating what it means to be a woman and what's truly important to each of them. On a beautiful weekend afternoon, Colette, gentle and easy going, bumps into Lisa, an old school friend. The two haven't seen one another since graduating. They attempt to make plans to catch up and rekindle the friendship, but it proves difficult. Lisa is just too busy, juggling her new business, managing incoming calls/texts and appointments, to notice Colette bending over backwards to salvage their friendship. As the story progresses we discover who these young women are, their history, relationship dynamic and what's really important to them. When it's obvious Colette and Lisa just can't connect, buried issues bubble to the surface, boiling over and possibly ending the friendship for good.

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Biography's

Myke Bakich-Writer/Director



Myke Bakich has helped craft the stories on many feature animated films including the 2014 Golden Globe nominated *The Book of Life*, *Epic*, *Escape from Planet Earth*, and *The Nut Job*. As a story artist he's contributed to projects for Marvel, Disney, Dreamworks, Fox, Amazon Studios, Lego and Coca Cola, to name a few. Myke's strength is cinematic and meaningful visual storytelling. His passion for moving pictures inspired him to expand into live action filmmaking. *Busy Bee* is Myke's first live action short film, which he directed and co-wrote with his wife Chandra Michaels.

Chandra Michaels-Writer/Producer/ Lead Actress (Colette)



Chandra Michaels has worked with John Stamos, Cybil Shepherd, Sandra Oh, Arsinee Khanjian, Don McKellar, and Henry Czerny. She has appeared in various films and episodic shows for CBS, CW, Global, CTV, CBC and Disney. Chandra studied Theatre at the University of Toronto, obtaining an Honours B.A with a major in Drama and minor in Cinema Studies.

As an actress and creative coach, expanding into writing and producing was a natural progression given Chandra's diverse background and interpersonal strengths. She is a multi talented individual producing and writing content out of a desire to further explore the human condition. She supports creating dynamic roles for herself and other women in film. She's a positive energetic force that takes charge of her dreams, and hopes to inspire others to create opportunities for themselves. She finds great spiritual fulfillment coaching other creative professionals to do so (www.coachchandramichaels.com).

It's with great pleasure she's collaborated with husband Myke Bakich on *Busy Bee*. Chandra and Myke have since opened their own production company, Les Deux Magots Films Inc. Chandra intends to continue producing and advocating films with strong female driven content.

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Ashley Ross-Lead Actress (Lisa)

Ashley Ross has appeared on FX's Man Seeking Woman, CW's Reign and Beauty and the Beast. She's also starring in the new web-series Evolve. Ashley graduated from Laurentian University with a B.A in Theatre and was cast in such productions as String of Pearls, A Chorus Line and Grease.

Director's Statement

As the husband and partner of an actress for over a decade, I've seen the lack of dimensional roles and opportunities for women in film. Chandra and I set out to make a film about a complex female friendship, with both light and dark tones. It's a satirical dramedy about gathering the courage to stand up to that self centered, crazy-maker in your life, even if it goes terribly wrong. With great excitement and pleasure I directed my first short film, Busy Bee.

About the Production

Production Location: Toronto, ON Canada

Filming Location: Yorkville in Toronto, ON Canada over 2 weekends in Fall of 2014

Myke and Chandra are a first time husband and wife filmmaking team, born and raised in Toronto, Canada. They went into production of Busy Bee a month after their wedding, planning both productions simultaneously. On a roll with making their dreams come true, from a magical engagement in Paris to getting married, their goal of coming together to create their own film seemed like a natural progression for them after producing their wedding to consummate their marriage.

Busy Bee's cast and crew was comprised of a local talent base of friends from Earl Haig Secondary School, family member's, new connections made through online database Mandy and current work contacts and colleagues.

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It's important for Myke and Chandra to feel an energetic connection with the people they work with. They want to feel a positive energy and creative connection that inspires creativity, productivity and collaboration.

Myke and Chandra like to work with people that take responsibility for how they communicate, and for the energy they bring to a project and to set, as they do. They are grateful to have found just that in the cast and crew of Busy Bee. Facilitating a positive energy that creates a safe learning environment and experience on set is central to their filmmaking.

Production Stills



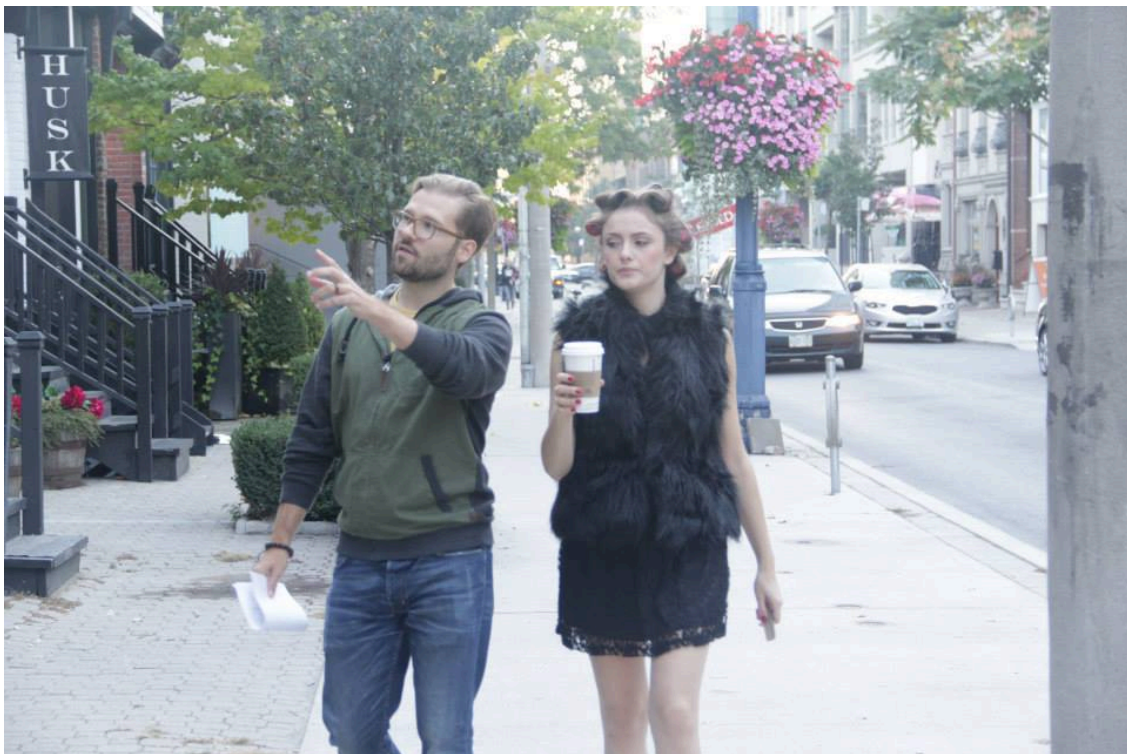
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Anecdotes

“Picture this, it’s 4am, the morning of the first day of shooting. I’m driving down to the location in a cube van filled with rental film equipment, tables, chairs, pylons, I’ve spent the last couple days collecting while sneaking out of my day job. The rental van I’m driving has already been damaged, the roof’s been scrapped up, I’ve torn up the side attempting to park it in my condo’s tiny parking lot, and to top it off, I definitely didn’t check the “I’d like insurance box” when I picked it up. I’m completely exhausted, I haven’t slept much for the last three days, I’m probably not going to for the next three days, but it was a peaceful 15 minutes, an eye in the storm type of moment and I got contemplative and thought to myself...

...What the hell am I doing?!!!

Why am I doing this? Am I wasting everybody’s time including my own? Does this even matter?

Months later, I can say that it did matter. It was huge. We’ve completed photography, post picture and audio, wrapped the film up in bow and are ready to share it. The challenges, the ups and downs, the creative freedom, embracing the unknown, the failures, the successes, the teamwork of new friends and old was incredibly engaging and fulfilling.

This was the most rewarding creative experience I have had in my entire life. Collaborating with my wife Chandra and all the cast and crew has been a dream come true. It isn’t so much the film itself that brings me the most joy, although I’m proud of what we have accomplished, it’s the filmmaking process that was the highlight. Working together with all our amazing cast and crew is what I hold closest today and in the days to come”.

- *Myke Bakich, Director*

Shooting on what we found to be the seemingly quietest shopping side street in Toronto, on the weekend became a favourite shortcut to shoppers and Yorkville locals. It was quite hard to control traffic and sound with loud motorcycles zooming by, drivers in cars circling around the block looking for parking or to check out what we were doing. There was an Adam Sandler movie shooting in our location last week and many passing by seemed like they really just wanted to be in the shot. At one point a man in his car drove right on to the sidewalk and into the shot of Lisa’s emotional breakdown with no regard.

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LISA

Did he you really have to go there...?

Car drives up on to sidewalk behind Lisa

COLETTE

Oh, HE went there alright.

A grumpy old man with a cane plowed through a really great take of Colette and Lisa on the bench.

An old woman came up to a crew member asking “Is this a lesbian movie? Is it a porno?”. Like really?

There were multiple wasps buzzing in and out of frame during our first weekend of shooting. One actually flew into Ashley’s face during a take on the bench. We all chose to see the bees on set as good luck.

A divine synchronicity happened on the last day of principle photography. A woman with her baby had decided to sit on a bench that was in frame for the opening shot of Colette running into Lisa. We quickly reset up the shot to include them as this was a perfect foreshadow to Colette’s pregnancy news later in the film.

FAQ'S of Director Myke Bakich

Coming from an animation background as a story artist, what inspired you to expand into directing live action?

I've always loved live action films and wanted to make them. Whether working in animation or live action my goal is to create dynamic, meaningful storytelling with deep themes and characters.

Why do you want to direct?

I love visual storytelling, from comics to films. I feel I have something to share and I really enjoying working in the visual arts. I also enjoy collaborating with others and filmmaking is a team sport.

What strength's do you bring to being a director?

I have a strong sense of story, structure, pacing and rhythm. I'm a good communicator, providing clear direction with a distinct vision. I have strong storytelling instincts and yet open to suggestions and

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collaboration. I'm very visually literate from my experience in illustration and storyboarding. I like to create an environment where cast and crew are engaged, creatively challenged and inspired to do their very best. I'm very encouraging, supportive and uplift those around me. I handle pressure well, can manage many things at once, and deliver on deadline and on budget. I keep calm during the most chaotic storms. My experience in preproduction as a story artist has made me very organized and well prepared on set.

Who are some of your favourite directors?

My favourite is Sam Mendes, director of my very two favourite films; Road to Perdition and American Beauty. He's a master storyteller able to work in many genres. He's not an auteur, with flashy style or techniques. His approach is in complete service to the story of the film he's making. I also love the films of Terry Gilliam, Stanley Kubrick, Orson Wells, Steven Spielberg and Brad Bird.

What did you learn from making Busy Bee? What was the hardest part about making the film? Easiest part?

When you create your own projects it's much more than the product you're producing. You build relationships and create environments that are energetic that can encourage and inspire.

The hardest part was making it on evenings and weekends as I work as a story artist full time. It would be a dream to be able to direct solely.

The easiest part was working with our crew. They were enthusiastic, talented, professional, hardworking and took initiative.

What inspired the film?

Various experiences my wife Chandra and I have had with people in our lives.

Why did you make the film?

Busy Bee originated from a screenwriting exercise that I did for practice. I pulled it out of a drawer a year later, and after Chandra and I read it, felt if developed further we could turn it into a short. It's been a long time dream of mine to make my own films. Making Busy Bee was about us taking charge of our creative careers, writing and creating what we want, and casting ourselves in the roles we want to be and play.

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What's the film about?

The film's about dealing with those self-absorbed unaware crazy makers in your life. How do you navigate being understanding and patient yet stand up for yourself? It's challenging. The film is about confronting that crazy maker once and for all and it going wrong. It calls into question when is it time to let that unhealthy friendship go and how do you do it. The film also explores narcissism and the glorification of busy in modern society.

What themes are explored in the film?

Friendship, authenticity, awareness, being "busy".

What was it like to creatively collaborate with your wife Chandra Michaels?

It was great. We collaborate really well together. And it feels natural for us to do so. Chandra's a wonderfully supportive partner and a very talented actress. She made my job directing easier because she is such a professional, giving a little something different every take and taking direction quickly and well. We've always had very good communication in our relationship, but working together challenged that, and exposed where we needed to be even tighter and more succinct. Discussing our thoughts, feelings, ideas and consulting one another every step of the way is important to being on the same page in our creative and personal partnership.

As a first filmmaker what advice would you give to someone embarking on making their first film?

Just do it. You won't know how to do everything, there's lots of mistakes to make, but you'll learn so much along the way. I love reading books, especially filmmaking ones but the deepest way to learn something is through experience. Be brave and have fun.

What kind of films do you want to make in the future? What type of stories do you want to tell?

I like stories that are deep and heavy with meaning and consequence. Busy bee being satirical is on the lighter side so I'd to explore some darker ideas. I enjoy characters who are tragic, tend to be their own worst enemy and at the very same time their only chance at salvation. I'd

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like to try a few more shorts to experiment indifferent genres before doing a feature.

Full cast and crew credits

DIRECTOR - Myke Bakich

WRITERS - Myke Bakich & Chandra Michaels

PRODUCER - Chandra Michaels

COLETTE - Chandra Michaels

LISA - Ashley Ross

EDITOR Amanda Strachan

DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY - Saud Boksmati & Andrew Lau

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - Lubomir Arsov

PRODUCTION MANAGER - Amanda Lomonaco

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

Cole Doran

Grant Simens

Jamie Yoon

Madeleine Starowicz

PRODUCTION SOUND - Ward Hails

KEY GRIP - Bobbie Gordon

PRODUCTION DESIGN - Odette Mattha

HAIR & MAKEUP - Gina Pulai

WARDROBE - Intuition Clothing

ANIMATIC EDITOR - Michele Klaponski

STORYBOARD ARTIST - Myke Bakich

PICTURE POST - Alan Kennedy

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AUDIO POST-PRODUCTION Post City Sound Inc.

SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR, DIALOG & ADR - Pino Halili

SOUND EFFECTS EDITOR & RE-RECORDING MIXER - Vladimir Borissov

RE-RECORDING SUPERVISOR - Allen Ormerod

MUSIC - Jingle Punks

CRAFT SERVICES - De Mello Palhelta

FRONT ROW - Insurance Brokers inc.



Technical information/Film Specs

Run time: 10:02

Picture Format: Color

Aspect Ratio: 1.78 (16X9 VIDEO)

Shooting Format: HDV

Shot on: Canon C100

Exhibition Format: Blu-Ray

Screener Format: Secure online screener, private Vimeo link

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