

LIFE HEIST

A Film by James MOORE
Digital Press Kit 2016



Amount needed to save Nick.
\$1,973
Amount raised to save Nick. **\$80,000**



A FILM BY JAMES MOORE

LIFE HEIST

Chaston FINALDI Conor HARRINGTON Tom FERGUSON Ellie WILLIAMS Koben POTALLA

Special Appearance
Adrian WOODROW Julian WOODROW

COMING MAY 2016



ABOUT THE FILM

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Directed by debut filmmaker James Moore, this story of desperation, passion, and redemption stars breakout performances from Tom Ferguson, Conor Harrington, Chaston Finaldi, and Ellie Williams. All shot on location in Manchester, Vermont, Life Heist captures a small-town feel that's intimate and personal. But with this it also has immense energy with it's inventive cinematography and stylish flare.

In Manchester, Vermont, security is minimal...real minimal. Folks don't even lock their doors when they go on vacation. When two Manchester high schoolers John (Harrington) and Alex (Finaldi) learn that a loved one has a rare kind of cancer, not covered by insurance, they take advantage of Manchester's minimal security by robbing the local bank. With the help of a janitor from their high school (Ferguson), and a crew of fellow high schoolers, the boys embark on this journey that entails excitement, love, betrayal, and redemption. Feel your heart beating and breaking in a chaotic harmony of life and death. Feel the desperation, perspiration, and redemption while laughing the whole way. This is Life Heist.

YEAR: 2016

LENGTH: 72 MINUTES

LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, FRENCH

COUNTRIES OF PRODUCTION: UNITED STATES

SHOOTING FORMAT: HD

SCREENING FORMAT: BLU-RAY, DCP

SCREENING RATIO: 2.35 CINEMASCOPE

FRAME RATE: 24FPS

SOUND: DTS STEREO 2.0

LIFE HEIST 1



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"In March of 2015, on my 17th birthday, my parents got me a boxset of Quentin Tarantino movies. At this point I had made countless Youtube videos since the age of 10, had been an avid moviegoer since even younger, and had a low budget short film under my belt that won the "Best Picture" award at our school's Academy Awards.

I popped in the disk and, having already seen the movie upwards of ten times, went straight to the bonus features. I went to the behind-the-scenes documentary. (I had watched a lot of them, living in Vermont that's the closest you can get to a film set.) Halfway through the documentary, Tarantino (manning an early 90's digital camera) walks up to Bruce Willis and starts shooting the breeze. At one point, Willis sees the camera in Tarantino's hand, points at it, and says "You know one of these days some 17-year-old kid is going to take one of those things and make a movie with it. Some kid's gonna make a killer, drop dead, poorly lit video movie that's gonna be the hippest f***king thing..and then there'll be a 100 of them after that."

I sat there on my 17th birthday, listening to what I thought were prophetic words from one of my favorite actors. What came from it in the following year and a half was one of the best experiences of my life. I made friends I'll remember forever, I got to do what I love the entire summer, and it didn't look bad on college apps!

The product is Life Heist, a 73-minute feature that is very personal to me...the characters are characters I know. They're exaggerated, yes, but I've seen these kids, seen what their circumstances have been and how that really screws up their lives as a result of it. The film has high production value despite it's minimal budget. It was funded by my parents, who were kind enough to say that if I skipped out on a summer film camp I was planning on attending that I could use the money for this project. The actors are all locals, a few with stage experience. I like to think it's my homage to the Italian Neorealist films that used locals, but I know in reality they were the only people who were willing to embark on this adventure with me. I owe each of them a lot.

I'd like to thank the community of Manchester, Vermont, for making this movie happen. Manchester is really the town

that's portrayed in the movie. It's like Mayberry R.F.D., everyone trusts everyone and hardly any disturbances happen in the course of the year. In order to shoot the bank scene, I called up the branch manager, a friend of my father and hockey coach of my younger brother, and simply asked for permission. This was extraordinary and I now realize that if I were growing up in L.A. or New York City, I would've never got this movie made. The rurality of Manchester allowed us to shoot in restaurants, schools, movie theaters, houses because we were on a first-name basis with everyone in the town.

However, it wasn't all fun and laughs. When you're working with a shoestring budget, I'm talking sub-10,000 dollar budget, the director is forced to do a lot of jobs. For the majority of the film I was the cinematographer, art director, sound guy a couple times, an actor, gaffer, and script supervisor. A lot of mornings I was up at 4 AM and wouldn't get back home till 2 AM the next day. About halfway through the summer, when we had about 10 minutes of the film done, I was ready to give up. But thanks to my tremendous cast and crew, who all encouraged me to keep working and keep the energy up and give a reason for the rest of crew to keep showing up every day, we pushed through it and got it done. I gained a lot of not only film experience during this movie but life experience: persistence, working with people, patience... I'm very grateful for it all.

I think the story behind this film provides it with some good marketability and I think that the first 15 minutes of the film gains the audience's trust and interest to hold on and watch the whole thing. We had three local screenings for the cast and crew and their friends and families and we were able to get more than 350 people to show up.

The entire crew has been breaking their backs trying to get this thing ready for festivals. A lot of the production crew are currently in film school aspiring for their big break. Several of the actors are majoring in acting in college also looking for theirs. I'm not calling this thing "Citizen Kane," nowhere near it...but if any of us get the opportunity to be seen, to show the film in front of a room of passionate audience members, it would mean the world to us to know our work was worth it.

Finally, I'd like to thank some of my influences whom without, I would've never been inspired enough to make this movie. First and foremost is Wes Anderson, specifically his films "Rushmore" and "The Grand Budapest Hotel." If you draw comparisons to "Bottle Rocket" and Life Heist, you are not alone..but oddly enough I hadn't seen Bottle Rocket before making this movie. It was the only Anderson picture I hadn't watched. Secondly is Jean-Luc Godard, particularly his films "Breathless" and "Band of Outsiders", they showed me that you could make a low budget movie that resonated with people. Last and not least, Orson Welles with "Citizen Kane", "The Magnificent Ambersons", and "Touch of Evil" really inspired me to go for it, to break your comfort zone. There are many many more who I could thank but in the name of time and space, I choose to omit.

I thank you for taking the time to look at this movie that provided me and my friends so much joy and memories during the summer of 2015. Enjoy it.



-James Moore"



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

JAMES MOORE

James Moore, 18-year-old filmmaker, writer, actor, and all around storyteller has grown up in the rural valleys of Vermont mastering the art of the story. Moore attended Burr and Burton Academy and collected five Gawlik Awards (the school's Academy Awards) including Best Comedy Short, Best Commercial Bit, two Best Film awards, and The Gawlik Award for best Senior Filmmaker.

Captain of his high school debate team, Moore was able to use his diplomacy in order to convince locals to act in the film, a bank owner to allow him to shoot a heist scene in the lobby, and gather over 350 people to attend the first screenings of the film.

Inspired by writer/directors Woody Allen, Ethan Coen, Wes Anderson, and Terrence Malick, in addition to film critic Gene Siskel, Moore will be studying philosophy at Pepperdine University in the spring of 2016.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

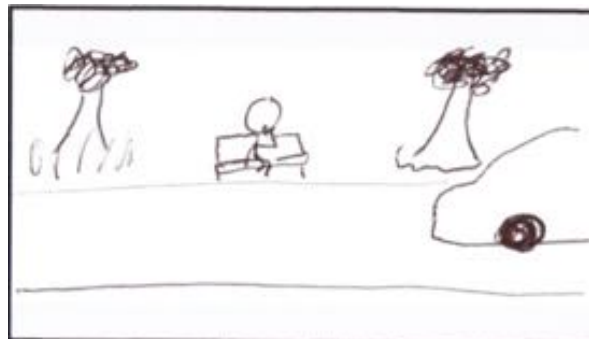
The Gift (Short) - 2015

Life Heist (Feature) - 2016

Uncle Austerity (Short) - 2016

Cut! (Short) - 2016

Shot from Moore's early storyboard for Life Heist



CAST AND CREW



THE PLAYERS

Chaston Finaldi - Alex
Conor Harrington - John
Tom Ferguson - Richard "Maniac" Maine
Ellie Williams - Stacy Maine
Koben Pottala - Jessie
Adrian Woodrow - Trey Babbage
Julian Woodrow - Dane Babbage
Kirk Knutson - Bank Manager
Chuck Thompson - Security Guard
Jill Thompson - Mrs. Swanson
Rob Hunter - Fred the Lawyer



Written and Directed
by
James MOORE

Executively Produced
by
Jim MOORE
Debbie MOORE
Bill MUENCH

Cinematography
by
Jack GEURTS

Boom Operation
by
Jonny GIRDZIS

Original Score
by
Neil FREEBERN

Sound Mix
by
Neil BENEZRA

Color Graded
by
Joshua KANUCK

The Manchester Journal

Burr and Burton Academy senior releases feature-length film "Life Heist"

MANCHESTER — At 18-years-old, college, a full-time job, or the end of homework assignments is usually on the mind. For James Moore, it's winning a film award, sharing his masterpiece with the community, and moving to California in the fall.

Moore is a Burr and Burton Academy (BBA) senior and debuted his feature-length film "Life Heist" on May 19 at Village Picture Shows. Additional viewings will occur on June 5 and 6 at 6:30 p.m. at the high school's Riley Center for the Arts.

"Life Heist" is about a group of high school students who try to raise money for one of the boy's younger brothers who has cancer. Fund sources change as they develop a plan to rob a local bank with the help of a janitor who served jail time for doing just that. During it all, one of the students becomes infatuated with the janitor's daughter, which ensues plot twists.

With the focus on local teenagers, Moore wished to incorporate more adults into the film, and was able to have Tom Ferguson, his mother's friend, and a theatre actor out of Arlington to play the part of the janitor.

"I met with James and read the script, and it was fun and interesting. I have to say the one thing that really impressed me the most was James' knowledge of film and film history at such a young age," Ferguson said. "We sort of rewrote a few things along the way, and he was interested in my view point and how I felt about certain scenes but he also carries the authority of someone who's in charge. His youth doesn't allow him a lot of experience, but you have a sense that he has a vision and knows where he's going. I was very comfortable and trusted him."

The idea for "Life Heist" came from Moore's film research and watching the behind the scenes DVD of "Pulp Fiction." He noticed a pattern amongst filmmakers in that their first film was made at age 27 and that it was their first or second big hit, but 10 years prior was when they had their research period.

"So if I was 17 and wanted to make something at 27, I wanted to have an idea of how," Moore said. "I made some comedies and vlogs (video blog) with my brother, and home movies like "Indiana Jones" since fifth grade, but I never had a crew or resources of high tech camera equipment until junior year. Being able to play with those, it allowed me to do more."

Moore started writing the film's script at the end of last spring with an expected production finish time of Christmas 2015, but he spent more time on post production work than planned.

After being consumed with the film for about a year, on top of finishing high school, Moore said he felt exposed once it was shown on May 19.

"It's nerve racking to see what [audience] going to think about it or if they think it's a legitimate idea. It's scary," he said. "I watched the movie so many times just for doing score and sound and editing on my own. I'd seen it so many times with every error and plot hole. [After the showing] I had my head down a little because I noticed even more things with an audience. Having some conversations, they didn't even notice it, the fact they didn't was relieving. They noticed all the good parts."



James Moore, writer and director of "Life Heist," films a basketball scene at the Manchester Recreation Park. (supplied photo)

Ticket proceeds from all "Life Heist" showing events will benefit the cinematography department at BBA.

"[Moore] understands that we support him. He understood he always had the support and during the summer if he needed anything he knew he could get it," Bill Muench, head of BBA's cinematography department said. "The department backed him up and it's so cool that the money will go back to the department and it will go back to give kids the opportunity to do what he did."

Muench got to know Moore as a basketball player as well as a film student. He said he helped the student director look at clips and rationalize why he chose to do the things

he did, with shooting or editing, for example.

"We just talked, it's not even like I weighed in on a shot, I would let him know what I knew about a shot and ask him what were you thinking why did you do this. My job was to force him to articulate something as to why he did something the way he did. He always had a reason," Muench said. "The kid is so self motivating and hard working that it's so much fun to work with him because he's willing to work all summer on a film and three or four months on post production. That's a lot of work for a kid his age."

About 100 people were involved in the making of the film. Johnny Girdzis, Max Mackson, John Amigo, Noah Kane, Ethan Hacker and Jack Geurts made up the core film and technical group. Locations such as BBA, Bennington Bank, the Inn at Westview Farm, Village Picture, Wood Fired Pizza and Stewart's were used as sites in the film.

Moore was allotted \$3,000 to create the film. He said his parents decided to fund the project rather than send him to a summer film camp in California. In the fall, Moore will fly out there to attend Pepperdine University to further his film studies.

Moore was this year's recipient for BBA's Gawlik Film Award, which goes to the best senior cinematography student. Wes Anderson, Moore's favorite director, even called from London to congratulate him. The Best Picture award for his digital short film "Cut" also went to Moore.

"What a cool couple of weeks for him. He wins the award and has ["Life Heist"] shown again for someone who started this process a year ago," Muench said. "I have a lot of respect for him and I'm excited to see where he goes in life."

Purchase tickets at bbacinema.ticketjunior.com; \$5 for students and \$10 adults.

—Makayla-Courtney McGeeney can be reached at (802)-447-7567, ext. 118.

CONTACT INFO.

James Moore

Writer/Director

james.moore@pepperdine.edu, (802)-430-4168

Debbie Moore

Producer

jeandarc61@comcast.net, (802)-342-2260

Jim Moore

Producer

jmoore1775@comcast.net, (802)-362-5899

Bill Muench

Producer

bmuench@burrburton.org, (802)-379-5431

THE END