THE VEIL

A GOTHIC NIGHTMARE IN VIRTUAL REALITY

ANGEL ST JAMES · AMY LEIGH RAFFE · HARLÉNE HERCULES

WRITTEN & CREATED BY ANGEL ST JAMES · DIRECTED BY AARON RICHARDSON © 2019

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Press Kit

LENGTH	YEAR	FORMAT	COUNTRY
12 MINUTES	2019	VR	AUSTRALIA

LOGLINE

A LOST GIRL MUST UNRAVEL A HAUNTED CONVENT'S SECRETS, IN TIME TO ESCAPE ETERNAL PUNISHMENT FOR HER SINS.

SYNOPSIS

Trapped in a haunted convent outside of time, a young girl chases her faceless doppelgänger for answers. But a demonic nun stalks them in the shadows, getting closer and closer. Can they unravel the convent's dark secrets in time to escape, before they are punished for their sins...forever?

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Aaron Richardson: aaronrichardson73@hotmail.com

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Director's Notes

I was approached by Angel whilst we were working at MIFF in August 2018 with the idea of creating a narrative driven VR Experience. "The Veil" was the result of this joyous collaboration.

Initially, we intended to create a full, active and alive Convent, with the leading characters isolated by a common tangent. But the nature and majesty of the space, and the understanding that the spherical world of the full 360 degree immersion was a character within the narrative, changed our thinking.

The camera was deliberately placed between the performers, allowing us to hide clues and multiple viewing perspectives for the audience to choose their own path through the narrative. VR is a singular experience and no two viewers watch the narrative in the same manner, so it was vital that every element had meaning and the ability to influence the viewer. We took a classic narrative and through the use of VR as a disruptive technology, opened the world for wider perspectives to be explored.

The combined talents of the company helped forge a new approach to my style as a director and filmmaker. It gave me a greater appreciation as to how we share the medium and the manner in which cinema must evolve beyond shared experience and open the path to new interpretations of ones work.

AARON RICHARDSON

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Writer's Vision

I have always been fascinated with the consequences of suppressing negative emotions like shame. *The Veil* was inspired by my experience growing up LGBTQ+, shoving down all my pain and guilt from age 5. It was only after coming out as bisexual at 16, that I understood the true extent of mental torture I'd been inflicting on myself beneath the surface.

The Veil shows that struggle externally through the love story between two girls running from their "sins". They are doppelgängers: two sides of the same coin, who represent the subconscious mind begging the conscious mind to stop burying shame deep inside. And to just embrace love instead.

Ultimately, I hope people walk away feeling that there's always hope. If we confront our shame, we'll find salvation. If we face our inner darkness, we can find our way back to the light again.

ANGEL ST JAMES

The Cast

ANGEL ST JAMES | **ACTRESS • WRITER • PRODUCER • EDITOR**

Angel studies screenwriting under a Pinnacle Scholarship at the Victorian College of The Arts, while interning on the script development team at Continuance Pictures. Her current project is *Violet Hills*, a fictional podcast she is co-writing and starring in, under mentorship from the Wheeler Centre. She has also trained in acting with NIDA Open, Victorian Youth Theatre, the Australian Performing Arts Grammar School, and the Children's Performing Company of Australia from age 6.

AMY LEIGH RAFFE | **ACTRESS**

Amy has been performing in the Victorian Youth Theatre's half yearly shows from the age of 12, appearing in the Children's Performing Company of Australia 2010 national tour of *The BFG*. She was awarded a full scholarship to attend Film & Television Studio International's Full Time Professional Acting course, graduating in 2015. Since then, she has trained locally and internationally, also appearing in *Romper Stomper*, *The Bureau of Magical Things*, and various short films. Amy's feature film debut will be in Alex Broun's *A Beautiful Request*, in 2019.

HARLÉNE HERCULES | **ACTRESS**

Harléne resigned from a teaching career in 2012, to pursue her passion for performing. She's appeared in various plays, such as the sold out *Centrelink The Musical*. Her TV credits include *The Ex-PM* (Season 1 and 2), *The Wrong Girl* (Season 3), and *Newton's Law*. She's been featured in major commercial campaigns for Coles, Officeworks, R U OK?, and was the face of healthcare workers for WorkSafe ads. In 2019, Harléne performed her first solo standup comedy show, *Parent-Teacher Night*, at the MC Showroom.

The Crew

AARON RICHARDSON | DIRECTOR • PRODUCER • EDITOR

Aaron has worked as a professional actor, director, producer and voice artist for the past 28 years. After graduating from the University of Ballarat, he won the Best Actor Award from the South Street One Act Play Festival. Passionate about "environmental theatre", he directs and produces Shakespearean plays in unique, natural locations. From *Hamlet* at The Geelong College, to *The Tempest* at the Loch Ard Gorge and *King Lear* in The Grampians. His acting and directing has seen him work in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and China. A long time volunteer with the Melbourne International film festival, "The Veil" marks his directorial debut in VR.

ASHLEIGH ROYLE | DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Ashleigh works as a freelance videographer and photographer. In between work, she fills her time on sets in a range of different roles. Some of her credits include production assisting on the Australian horror film *Living Space*, assistant director on The Paper Kites' *Electric Indigo* music video. In 2019, Ashleigh recently interned at Sundance, camera operating with Variety and IndieWire.

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Fast Facts

- *The Veil* pushes creative and technological boundaries, as a live-action narrative in 360 degree virtual reality.

- *The Veil* is a diverse, female driven film. The cast is made up of all women, of different sexualities and races. Women and people of colour also feature in key crew roles, including cinematography, production design, and script editing.

- *The Veil* has politically relevant LGBTQ themes. The story is also left open to multiple interpretations, on purpose. There are even hints in the credits pointing to a deeper reading of the film.

- *The Veil* was filmed with a 360 camera generously loaned from StaplesVR, a New Zealand company, which specialises in VR / 360 equipment and production.

- *The Veil* was written, produced, edited by, and starring the same person. Angel St James is a 20 year old filmmaker studying screenwriting, at the Victorian College of The Arts.

- *The Veil* was written and shot in Melbourne, Australia, with virtually no budget. The project was a labour of love for all of its Australian cast and crew.

- *The Veil* was directed, produced and edited by Aaron Richardson, who has worked as a theatrical actor, director and voice artist for the last 28 years. *The Veil* marks his directorial debut into virtual reality filmmaking.

THE VEIL

A GOTHIC NIGHTMARE IN VIRTUAL REALITY

Full Credits

WRITTEN AND CREATED BY
Angel St James

DIRECTED BY
Aaron Richardson

CONSCIOUS MIND PLAYED BY
Angel St James

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND PLAYED BY
Amy Leigh Raffe

THE NUN PLAYED BY
Harléne Hercules

EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY
Angel St James
Aaron Richardson

CINEMATOGRAPHY BY
Ashleigh Royle

PRODUCTION DESIGN BY
Millie Ng

ORIGINAL SCORE BY
Drew Lane

3D STITCHING BY
Kody A Nguyen

SOUND ENGINEERING BY
Michael Gibbins

SCRIPT EDITING BY
Jynell St James
Gina Song

EDITED BY
Aaron Richardson
Angel St James

ADDITIONAL EDITING BY
James Green

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS MODELLED BY
Margot

FILMED ON LOCATION AT
Abbotsford Convent

CAMERA EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY
StaplesVR

FESTIVAL SELECTION LISTINGS

Official Selection for the Los Angeles Lift-Off Online Film Festival 2019.

Official Selection for the Amsterdam Lift-Off Online Film Festival 2019.

Official Selection for the London Lift-Off Film Festival 2019.

Official Selection for the Berlin Lift-Off Film Festival 2020.

Official Selection for the Tokyo Lift-Off Film Festival 2020.

Official Selection for the Toronto Lift Off Film Festival (Emerging Talent) 2020.

Official Selection for the Sydney Lift Off Film Festival (First Film Shorts) 2020.

Official Selection for the Melbourne Lift-Off Film Festival (Trailblazer Shorts) 2020.

Official Selection for the Seven Colors Australian Film Festival, Melbourne, 2020.

Official Selection for the Manchester Lift-Off Film Festival (New Voices Shorts) 2021.

Official Selection for the New York Lift-Off Film Festival (Trendsetter Shorts) 2021.

Official Selection for Kalakari International Film Festival, Dewar, India. 2021.

Official Selection for Paris International Short Film Festival, 2021.

Official Selection for Cairo International Short Film Festival, 2021.

Official Selection for Berlin Shorts Festival, 2021.

Official Selection for San Francisco Indie Film Festival. 2021.

Official Selection for Vienna Independent Film Festival, 2021.

Official Selection for the Osaka International Film Festival, Japan, 2021.

Official Selection for Voices Rising Film Festival, New York, USA, 2021.

Official Selection for Wallachia International Film Fest, Bucharest, 2021.

Official Selection for Leichter VR Storytelling Festival, Frankfurt, 2021.

Official Selection for Thessaloniki Free Short Film Festival, Macedonia, Greece, 2021.

Official Selection for Cannes International Cinema Festival, Cannes, France, 2021.

Official Selection for Onkyo Film Awards, Tallinn, Estonia, 2021.

Official Selection for Continental Film Festival, Munich, Germany, 2021.

Official Selection for Barcelona International Film Festival, Spain, 2021.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

BEST LGBTQ Film – Cyrus International Film Festival of Toronto, Canada 2020

BEST LGBTQ Film – Sweden Film Festival. Sweden 2020.

BEST LGBTQ Film – 1st Monthly Film Festival, Belgrade, Serbia. 2021.

BEST LGBTQ Film – Hong Kong Indie Film Festival 2021.

BEST LGBTQ Film – Accord Cine Fest, Mumbai, India, 2021.

BEST LGBTQ Film – Rome International Movie Awards, Italy, 2021.

BEST LGBTQ Film - Sydney Indie Film Festival, Australia, 2021.

BEST LGBTQ Film - Austin International Art Festival, Texas, USA, 2021.

BEST LGBTTTIQ Film – Moscow Russia International Film Festival, Moscow, USSR, 2021.

BEST HORROR Film – The Gladiator Film Festival, Istanbul, Turkey, 2021.

BEST EXPERIMENTAL Film – Toronto Film Magazine, Toronto, Canada. 2020.

BEST EXPERIMENTAL Film - Artisan International Film Festival, Stratford Upon Avon, UK, 2021.

BEST SOUNDTRACK – Buenos Aires International Film Festival (BUEIFF), Argentina, 2021.

BEST SOUNDTRACK - Artisan International Film Festival, Stratford Upon Avon, UK, 2021.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – LGBTQ Film – World Film Carnival, Singapore, 2021.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT - 360 Degree Film – World Film Carnival, Singapore, 2021.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – 360 Degree Film - Cinema4Screen, Mumbai, India. 2021.

Nominated BEST SHORT INTERNATIONAL Film – Cinema4Screen, Mumbai, India. 2021.

2nd Place – Best 360 Film)II(ISAFF, Saint-Petersburg, Russia, 2021.

2nd Place – Best Virtual Reality Film Buenos Aires International Film Festival (BUEIFF), Argentina, 2021.

3rd Place – Real World XR Awards – Australian VR Film of the Year, Melbourne, Australia. 2020.

Finalist – Evolution! Mallorca International Film Festival, Spain. 2020.

Finalist - Beyond The Curve International Film Festival, Paris, France. 2020.

Finalist – Venice Shorts Film Festival, Venice Beach, California, USA. 2020.

Honorable Mention – Athens International Art and Film Festival, Greece. 2021.

Semi-Finalist Phoenix International Short Film Festival, Canada. 2020.

Semi-Finalist Rome Independent Prisma Awards, Italy 2021.

BEST LGBTQ'S FILM
Cyrus International Film Festival of Toronto
2020

BEST LGBTQ
Rome International Movie Awards
2021

BEST LGBTQ FILM
Sydney Indie Short Festival
2021

WINNER
BEST LGBTTTIQ FILM
THE VEIL
MOSCOW
RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
JULY 2021

WINNER - BEST LGBTQ FILM
Sweden Film Awards
2020

BEST LGBTQ SHORT
Hong Kong Indie Film Festival
2021

BEST LGBTQ SHORT
Austin International Art Festival
2021

Best LGBTQ Film
1st Monthly Film Festival
2020
Winner
Belgrade, Serbia

BEST EXPERIMENTAL
ARTISAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
World Film Carnival - Singapore 2021
LGBTQ FILM

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
CINEMA4SCREEN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
2021

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
World Film Carnival - Singapore 2021
VR /AR /360° VIDEO

BEST EXPERIMENTAL FILM
Toronto Film Magazine Fest
2020

BEST SCORE
ARTISAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

WINNER
ACCORD CINE FEST
FEBRUARY 2021
THE VEIL
BEST LGBTQ SHORT

FINALIST - BEST VR FILM
Evolution! Mallorca International Film Festival
2020

2021
AIMAFF
HONORABLE MENTION

2nd Place
BEST 360 FILM
ISAFF
THE VEIL

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
NEW YORK 2021
OFFICIAL SELECTION

FINALIST
Buenos Aires International Film Festival
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Berlin Shorts Award
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Venice Shorts
Venice Beach, California 2020

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
AMSTERDAM 2019
ONLINE FESTIVAL OFFICIAL SELECTION

OFFICIAL SELECTION
MGA - MOSCOW GOLD AWARDS
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
KALAKARI FILM FESTIVAL
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Cairo Indie Short Festival
2021

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
AMSTERDAM 2019
ONLINE FESTIVAL OFFICIAL SELECTION

OFFICIAL SELECTION
BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
LICHTER VR Storytelling Award
Frankfurt, 2020

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Wallachia Int'l Film Festival
2021

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
LONDON 2019
ONLINE OFFICIAL SELECTION

BEST SOUNDTRACK
Buenos Aires International Film Festival
2021
BUEIFF 2021

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LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
SYDNEY 2020
OFFICIAL SELECTION

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
MELBOURNE 2020
OFFICIAL SELECTION

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
MANCHESTER 2021
OFFICIAL SELECTION

SEMI-FINALIST
PRISMA
FILMS INDEPENDENT FILM AWARDS

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
TOKYO 2020
ONLINE OFFICIAL SELECTION

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
BERLIN 2020
ONLINE OFFICIAL SELECTION

LIFT-OFF GLOBAL NETWORK
TORONTO 2020
OFFICIAL SELECTION

3rd PLACE
Real World XR Awards
2020
AUSTRALIAN VR FILM OF THE YEAR

Finalist
Beyond the Curve
International Film Festival
2020

SEMI - FINALIST
Phoenix Shorts
2020

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Paris International Short Festival
2021

SEMI-FINALIST
Osaka International Film Festival (OIFF)
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Thessaloniki Free Short Festival
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Vienna Indie Short Film Festival
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
San Francisco Indie Short Festival
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Cannes International Cinema Festival
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2021 Voices Rising Film Festival
2021

Official Selection
SCAFF 2020
7 Colors
Australian
FILM FESTIVAL

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Onyko Films Awards
2021

THE VEIL
BEST HORROR
WINNER
THE GLADIATOR FILM FESTIVAL
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