

*...when a hand which appears to  
have strong cards nevertheless loses.*



# **BAD BEAT**

A SHORT FILM BY DAVID AMBROSE

PRESS KIT



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## SYNOPSIS

Charlie is set. He's got his own place now and his brother just whipped up the family's famous meatball recipe. But a phone call and a briefcase threaten to upend everything he's worked for, sending him hurtling on a collision course with fate. As old wounds come knocking at the door, Charlie must decide to let them in or not.

My friend Nick had just recently moved into a new apartment. He was always looking to work together as composer and director. This sparked great interest to explore his apartment as the setting for a short film. I wrote a screenplay that would take place in his apartment, it was called 'Bad Beat'.

The final scene had to be outdoors, after such an intense build up of the story. Once I found a local gritty underpass, I knew it was the perfect place.

We needed to get in there – with the writings on the wall, the dirt/mud inside, and low lighting would make the film feel real. The apartment was perfect for the first two acts. Now I have found the perfect setting for the final act three.

The plan was to shoot the film in one location using natural lighting, and the same filmmaking style for the outdoor scene as well. This approach would be difficult as we were going to be at the mercy of the sun. But it was also, in my opinion, the only way.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

To be authentic, our cast would need to be mostly people from around the northeast area, NJ and NY.

We would shoot in a 4:3 aspect ratio and in black and white coloring. Using natural light and a bounce board to light the scenes.

The idea was to take the pure reality of the characters from the northeast but treat it in a cinematic manner. This would reflect the experience of the main protagonist, and truly put together our narrative. A filmmaking method which used natural lighting and nearby locations, was going to heighten the realism, and become more intimate with the aspect ratio.

This short film shoot was very hard to say the least but was the best three days of my life.

With the final edit wrapped after many alterations, the process of editing and trying new things was such an amazing learning experience.

I will not know yet if this film will be a success or not. However, I do know that I am beyond grateful for the blessing I was given to go on such an adventure with an amazing cast and crew. This truly wouldn't be possible without every name that is listed in the credits.



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## Background

'Bad Beat' was inspired by the films Mean Streets, La Haine, Breathless, and Following.

All the core ideas within the characters of these films, led to the development of a short screenplay by writer and director David Ambrose. This short film was funded by a part time internship he saved up from the previous year.

'Bad Beat' was originally supposed to be a school project, but as the covid pandemic hit, the shoot had to be postponed. David used this time to expand the script and shoot it outside of the school's assignment.

## A Filmmaker's Approach

After committing to the old apartment and gritty underpass, writer/director David Ambrose began to create what would be a filmmaking style influenced by the French new wave and 90s indie film boom. These directors would use the world around them to make a meaningful film.

This unique style would dictate filming occurring during the cold winter, where the chills of the characters can be seen with their breath and with the dead trees outside. The script and filming would be enhanced under these conditions and any limitations they presented.

The casting process would be actors around this area looking for work. Anybody who could express where they are from by the way they dressed, talked, and walked.

It would involve the narrative filmmaking process that would integrate an experimental film shooting style as naturally as possible. A unique world the characters are set in, now expressed cinematically.

This process took about a year of planning for everything, especially the more experimental shots. Writer/Director David Ambrose spent his time on both locations, taking photos to study on his own. He wanted to capture this unique world he lived in the best way possible.

The final edit results in a film that fuses narrative filmmaking with experimental film shooting styles and editing, to produce a true picture of what the characters go through. A story about taking a chance, surrounded by this gritty environment.



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## Casting

The casting for the film was a bumpy, yet very fun experience. The casting for characters would occur at a studio on campus, where writer/director David Ambrose attended college.

The call was for local talent who lived nearby the shooting location.

After interviewing the actors who showed up for the casting call. The lead roles were selected. Over the course of the year, actors fell out of the project. The lead role for Charlie was earned by Nathan Raia, a week and a half before shooting. He was discovered as an applicant from New York to audition for the character. 'Bad Beat is his first and only film role to date.

The other lead roles of Nicky and Johnny were earned by Dominick Cost and Vinny Giovanniello. This was Dominick's Cost's acting debut. Vinny Giovanniello being the most experienced actor on set, with most accolades to his name.

## Shooting & Location

The film was shot at the Fairway Gardens apartments in Bloomfield, NJ.

Shooting occurred over three days during New Jersey's cold winter. And was filmed on cinema camera and lenses by camera operators Nick Sancenito and Jacob Evanina.

## Post Production

Post production was a multi crew effort.

Sound department's Sean Lee was up for the task as editor in post-production. He edited the film from all its multiple cuts, given input from writer/director David Ambrose and assistant director/composer Nicholas Sisti.

Once the final edit was complete, the uncompressed footage was sent to assistant director/composer Nicholas Sisti. Nicholas would then create an original drum score and sound design. All of this was done in his in-studio apartment. The same apartment filming took place.



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## The Filmmaker David Ambrose Writer/Director

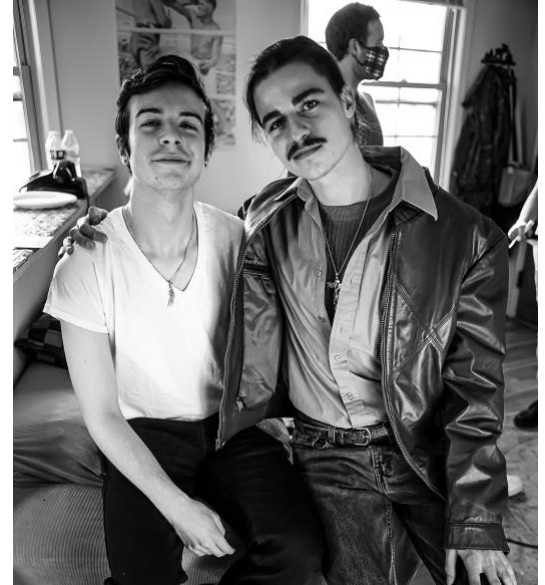
David Ambrose graduated from Montclair State University. While attending business school, he wrote and directed multiple short films he made with classmates and friends. In 2017, a short silent film written and directed by David, was selected to be screened at the Project FX student film festival.

His latest short film 'Bad Beat', which was completely self-financed, is currently being submitted to film festivals around the world.

David is currently writing his first feature film and works editing for podcasts and businesses.

He lives in New Jersey, USA.  
15 mins from NYC.






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## Key Production Credits

David Ambrose.....Director  
 David Ambrose.....Writer  
 Nicholas Sisti.....Assistant Director  
 Nick Sancenito.....Camera Operator  
 Jacob Evanina.....Camera Operator  
 Sean Lee.....Editor  
 Sabrina Hajsok .....Sound  
 Sean Lee .....Sound  
 Cheyenne Santiago.....Production Assistant

Nathan Raia ..... "Charlie "  
 Vinny Giovanniello ..... "Johnny "  
 Dominick Cost. .... "Nicky "  
 Michael Mazzone..... "Man #1"  
 Roddy Williams..... "Man #2"

Project Type.....Short  
 Runtime.....15 minutes 18  
 seconds  
 Shooting format.....Digital  
 Aspect Ratio.....4:3  
 Country of filming.....United States

## Useful Links

Trailer:  
<https://youtu.be/219ialdPtUs>

Filmfreeway page:  
[filmfreeway.com/BadBeat834](http://filmfreeway.com/BadBeat834)