A LUKAS HANULAK FILM

EMPTY SPACES

PRESS KIT

BASIC INFO

Project Name: Empty Spaces
Directed by: Lukas Hanulak
Written by: Jess Waters
Produced by: Star People Pictures & White Raven Pictures
Run time: 16 minutes 26 seconds
Genre: family drama, coming-of-age
Completion date: April 21st, 2022
Country of origin: Canada
Country of filming: Canada (Victoria, BC)
Language: English
Screening copy: DCP, QuickTime
Shooting format: RED
Aspect ratio: 16:9
Film color: Color

Distribution & Sales: Star People Pictures
Contact: lucashanulak@gmail.com

TAGLINE:

Two sisters struggle with the loss of their father but find themselves.

SHORT SYNOPSIS:

Debbie returns home to console Aiden after the loss of their father. They fight, reconcile, and finally understand what they lost.

LONG SYNOPSIS

When Debbie returns home for her father's funeral she is confronted by her younger sister Aiden, who believes she abandoned the family.

The death of their father opens wounds which have long festered beneath the numbing influence of alcoholism and addiction, and ultimately exposes long-held secrets.

As the sisters go through their father's personal belongings and ponder who he really was, their mother stands alone, self-defensive and bitter, unwilling to let go of her control over the family's story.

Struggling to reconcile their love for their family with their feelings of disappointment and frustration, Debbie and Aiden argue with each other, confront their mother, and come to understand they must let go of much more than their father.

They grieve for a life lived unfulfilled, for the home life they wish they had, and they resolve to move forward on a path different from the one their parents chose for the family.

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

LUKAS HANULAK is a Slovak-born film and TV show director/producer/writer who immigrated to Canada in 2019 with his wife and three kids. Since 2020 he has been a member of the Director's Guild of Canada.

With a degree in Film Direction, he started his career with the award-winning short film THE FATHER (2009). During the years 2009-21, he directed a dozen crime/drama TV series for major broadcasters in the Czech Republic and Slovakia including a successful TV show LADY & KING (the most-watched TV show in the Czech Republic in 2018/19). Until today he directed 30+ episodes and with more than a decade of experience, he developed the ability to create unique story interpretations while exploring different visual styles & film genres. He also co-created the award-winning co-production documentary THE GOOD DEATH – a story about voluntary assisted death that aired on many worldwide TV markets.

In 2022 he directed and produced his first Canadian film - a female-centric short film drama EMPTY SPACES. His projects interests include character-driven dramas, rite-of-passage stories, and interactive movies.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This film is dedicated to those who are seekers of liberation from unhealthy family patterns; those who do not conform to the traditions of the family system; those who constantly seek to revolutionize beliefs and oppose the pathways marked for them by their parentage and upbringing; those who are criticized, tried and rejected; those who rebel, repair, detoxify and create new blooming branches on their family tree. To those who shout for their ancestors, whose countless unfulfilled desires and frustrated talents manifest themselves in their descendant's rebellion: let no one make you doubt! Take care of your rarity as the most precious flower on your family tree.

WRITER

JESS WATERS is a Black non-binary writer who writes stories about queerness, blackness, family, and all the ways that people on the margins of society can find healing and family. Building on their childhood growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, they aim to create characters like themself and those who nurtured their growth as a writer. As a queer Black person, Jess understands how and why representation matters, and makes it their purpose to fight for the opportunity to tell stories like their own, especially stories that detail young Black women's coming of age in dynamic and compelling ways. Jess has won numerous screenwriting awards including Official Selections at WeScreenplay's Diverse Voices Competition and Shore Scripts Screenplay Competition. Additionally, Jess is a part of the Artistic Standard TV 2020-2021 mentorship program and a winner of the Netflix x Ghetto Film School Content Creation Program.

PRODUCER

LEAH FLAGG is an emerging filmmaker with a passion for team building, collaboration, and storytelling.
As a screenwriter she is driven to create nuanced characters within powerfully emotive stories to both enrich and entertain audiences. As a producer, she makes it a priority to develop opportunities for diverse writers, directors, and crew as they move through the various stages of their creative endeavours.
Leah left the world of professional theatre to learn filmmaking from the bottom up; working as a production assistant, script supervisor, production coordinator, production manager, screenwriter, and producer in independent and mainstream film/tv productions.
Recent credits in the production department: "The Island Between Tides", "Bones of Crows", "Maid", and "American Dreamer".

CINEMATOGRAPHER

DANIEL CARRUTHERS started his career in film working as a camera assistant and lamp op. He has over 50 credits as a Director of Photography and is an associate member to the Canadian Society of Cinematographers. He's had multiple award nominations and received a Leo Award for his work on the short film "Encore".
Some of his Victoria-shot films include the Features All-in Madonna, Open for Submissions, Jackhammer and the award winning film The Devout. Daniel recently shot the feature Zoe MP4 which is currently in post production. Daniel Lives and works on Vancouver island.

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

JOYCE KLINE is a Leo award winning short film production designer and filmmaker with a passion for storytelling. Formally trained as a visual artist, she draws on wide-ranging experience as a writer, playwright, dancer, set decorator and installation, performance and storyboard artist.
Currently, Joyce hosts Push In: The Cinevic Podcast, serves as production design mentor for Cinevic Society of Independent Filmmakers' Incubator series, and wrote and directed her own first short film Cancelled Stamp--voted Audience Favourite Best Short Film at the 2022 Victoria Film Festival.

COMPOSER

DALIBOR KOCIAN aka STROON is one of the leading talents of the Slovak electronic music scene. He had started to play in metal and improv bands around the millennium and later he developed a unique way of fusing genres. As a solo artist he spent the last ten years blurring the borders between club music, experimental and contemporary classical music. He released various music projects as well as working with theatre, films and commercials.

CAST

AMELIA CROFT was signed by an agent at age 7. Despite living on an island, she commuted twelve hours weekly for a year and a half to pursue training. Since then, Amelia has worked in theater, film, and television. She has also done radio interviews and modeling. Amelia, now 17, is highly involved in dance and choreography, music and singing, and writes creatively in many genres.

Amelia's formative years were shaped by her relationship with her sister who has severe disabilities, and she's very sensitive to disability challenges. "Empty Spaces" stands out for Amelia because she was able to embody Aiden, a character who struggles with loss and her reactions to family dysfunction. As Aiden has very low points emotionally, Amelia was appreciative of the enormous support from cast and crew. Amelia is beyond grateful to have a team who believes in her, and is excited for their future in film.

AMELIA CROFT

MARISA VIEIRA

MARISA VIEIRA is a Metis Portuguese actress, screenwriter, and producer based on Vancouver Island. She studied acting at Screen Actors Studio of Victoria and has been cast in numerous independent and commercial productions, working on projects for Netflix, Hallmark, Paramount, and CBC. She sees each role and experience as an opportunity to learn more and evolve professionally. For her role in "Empty Spaces", Marisa was pleased to explore the role of sisterhood, intrigued by the nuances of her character and the family's dynamic.

Very active in her local filmmaking community, Marisa is a familiar face in the background, on set, and on camera. Her recent experience as a producer on "Misplaced Trust" has been an integral part of her unique filmmaking journey and she recently wrapped work on "Cutline" another project she is proud of, which premiers Spring 2022.

JOANNE WILSON

JOANNE WILSON is a Canadian actor who has appeared in supporting-lead and principal film roles for Hallmark, Lifetime, GAC Family, and various streaming platforms. Her most recent film credits include Greed; A Seven Deadly Sins Story, A Christmas Star, Cranberry Christmas, Love at the Ranch, and Open for Submission. Selected television series include Arrow, Motive, The Intruders, and The L Word.

As a versatile and accomplished theatre actor, Joanne has appeared on various Canadian stages in roles ranging from Shakespeare to Tennessee Williams. As a busy voice actor, Joanne can be heard on the Disney animated series Gigantosaurus and in several other animation movies, series and VR games, as well as on hundreds of television and radio commercials throughout North America. Joanne has also worked as a writer, announcer, interviewer and producer of internationally syndicated radio programs, and as a television host and lifestyle reporter.

BRUCE A. SMITH

Originally from the Eastern United States and fortunate to have lived in many beautiful spots on the continent, a composer and actor BRUCE A. SMITH is now grounded in the Pacific North West, in the Vancouver Area , Canada. Playing his first concert before his feet could reach the floor, performing for The Prince of Wales at a UNESCO world heritage site, professional orchestras and studying at the Banff Centre of Performing Arts were all a part of his musician's journey.

Bruce received his masters degree in music education from the University of Alberta. Teaching composition and performance found a naturally easy place in his work. Recently retired from educating and supporting young artists, the pull to create underscoring for Film and TV are now his creative focus. Bruce is blessed to wake up every morning with a sonic story that just needs to be shared.

FILM STILLS

CREDITS

STAR PEOPLE PICTURES in association with WHITE RAVEN PICTURES presents "EMPTY SPACES" AMELIA CROFT JOANNE WILSON MARISA VIEIRA and BRUCE A. SMITH casting by JACQUI KAESE costume design by LETA CUSHING – WOODCOCK production design by JOYCE KLINE music by STROON sound design by MILOS HANZELY edited by TOMAS HOLOCSY cinematography by DANIEL CARRUTHERS produced by LEAH FLAGG and LUKAS HANULAK screenplay by JESS WATERS directed by LUKAS HANULAK

Produced with the co-operation of

UBCP/ACTRA

Production Company

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CINEVIC KESLOW CAMERA BCFerries SIXMILE FRONT ROW SHOP

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