

GARAGE

A film by Aaron Sanders

Genre: Drama/Suspense

Runtime: 13 min.

PRESS NOTES

www.garagemovie.com

Aaron Sanders, Director
aaron@dissectionmedia.com

Linda Balaban, Producer
linda@dissectionmedia.com

Melissa Daniels, Executive Producer
melissa@wethepeoplecreative.com

Tag

The past haunts us all.

Logline

A man crippled by PTSD flashbacks returns to the garage where his horrible past awaits him.

Synopsis

When he was five, Joshua was kidnapped by a neighbor and sexually abused in a garage. Forty years later, he returns to the same spot with the desperate hope of stopping the PTSD flashbacks.

PTSD Flashbacks are waking nightmares. They are intense, repeated episodes of a traumatic experience while the sufferer is fully awake. Flashbacks can come on suddenly and feel uncontrollable, and sufferers often cannot distinguish between the flashback and reality.

In the garage, Joshua makes peace with his five-year-old self. He confronts his abuser and exacts his revenge. When he returns to the car, however, he sees himself sitting in the driver's seat....Joshua is stuck in a trauma loop.

Director's Statement

When I was 5 years old (like my main character), I was kidnapped by a neighbor and forced into a garage. Four decades later my trauma stormed out of me, and I began to breakdown. Fortunately, I have a very wise and loving partner, Linda, who fought to get me the help I needed. Eventually, I was diagnosed with PTSD, and my whole life came into focus.

I underwent immediate and intense trauma recovery, and while I had to put many things in my life on hold, writing became the one place I felt consistently safe and productive. I am grateful to say that now I'm living an almost symptom free life. A true miracle.

Last year, Linda said to me, "We didn't survive this just to live another day. We need to help people who are going through the same thing." I agreed, and so we turned our creative work into advocacy. We started [72 Hour Hold](#), a blog about our recovery from PTSD. And we decided to make our first film, *Garage*.

Garage is a short suspense film about what it's like to live with untreated PTSD. The protagonist in the film, Joshua, returns to the garage where he was molested as a child in an attempt to make peace with his past. His PTSD symptoms are out of control, and he just wants some relief.

The film demonstrates how the effects of trauma can last long after the event. PTSD flashbacks can be terrifying, and many people suffering from untreated trauma can be, in effect, living in horror.

Trauma has become a global health epidemic. The numbers are difficult to calculate but according to the National Council for Behavioral Health, 70% of adults in the U.S. have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives. Regarding sexual trauma, experts estimate that at least one in four women and one in six men experience it in their lifetimes.

Nearly all children who witness a parental homicide or sexual assault will develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Similarly, 90% of sexually abused children, 77% of children exposed to a school shooting, and 35% of urban youth exposed to community violence develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Garage demonstrates the power of survivor stories, of NOT being silent anymore, and will create community around what is such an isolating experience.

Photo Stills



Poster Art



Filmmakers

Aaron Sanders – Writer/Director

Aaron Sanders is the writer/director of *Garage* (2021), a short film based on his experiences as a male survivor of childhood sexual abuse. He is also the award-winning author of *Speakers of the Dead: A Walt Whitman Mystery* (Penguin-Random House, 2016). In the novel, Sanders explores how Walt Whitman's years as an investigative reporter in 19th century New York City shaped his masterwork, *Leaves of Grass*. Aaron's short stories and essays have been published in such places as *Lithub*, *Carolina Quarterly*, *Writer's Digest*, *Library of America*, among others. Before moving to Los Angeles to pursue writing full-time, Sanders was a tenured professor at Columbus State University. He earned a PhD in American Literature from University of Connecticut and an MFA in fiction writing from University of Utah. Aaron is currently in development of the feature version of *Garage*.

Linda Balaban – Writer/Producer

Linda Balaban is second generation of the renowned Balaban and Katz theater moguls. Raised in a family that valued a career path in the arts, she was fortunate to study classical music at North Carolina School of the Arts and theatre, speech and communications at Boston's Emerson College. As a working actor in Chicago, she eventually moved to Los Angeles to continue her career and found herself behind the camera, producing on the hit HBO series *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. She has also worked in film distribution (*Awake* and *Home of the Brave* with Counterpoint Films). Linda is elated to be back on a creative path with *Garage*. As a result of her experience with her fiancé's PTSD, she has become certified as a HeartMath Coach and Mentor.

Melissa Daniels – Executive Producer

Melissa Daniels is a Producer based out of Los Angeles, CA. Having secured a bachelor's in Journalism, she served as a field producer in broadcast television prior to operating as the COO at a hyper local music magazine before making her transition into advertising and branded film. She spent several years working the commercial circuit as an ad agency producer and the Sr. Producer for GoPro's Branded Content division before founding We the People, a commercial and original content studio that works to create space for marginalized voices. Currently in post on her first feature directed by Ty Hodges, Melissa comes to the *Garage* team with a vested interest in helping normalize PTSD and trauma recovery.

Cast



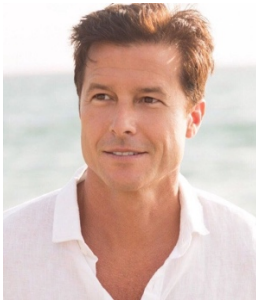
Adam Kaufman – Joshua

Adam is an American actor, who is best known for his roles as Lucas Newsome in the NBC series *State of Affairs*, Charlie Keys in the Steven Spielberg produced mini-series *Taken* (2002), Parker Abrams on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997) and Ethan on *Dawson's Creek* (1998) where his and Kerr Smith's characters shared the first gay kiss on a one-hour drama in network history.

Adam has worked steadily in television, starring in pilots for ABC (*Brookfield* (1999) written by Josh Schwartz, *Metropolis* (2000) opposite Michael Ealy), *WB Bloomington, Indiana* written by John Ridley, FOX (*The Only Living Boy in New York* (2000) opposite Jill Clayburgh and Kate Walsh) and UPN (*Beck and Call* (2004) opposite Jordana Spiro), and doing recurring and guest roles on *Without a Trace* (2002), *NCIS* (2003), *Melrose Place* (2009), *Veronica Mars* (2004), *Mad Men* (2007) and *The Client List*. He's also starred in a number of TV movies, including Hallmark Hall of Fame's *Loving Leah* (2009) opposite Lauren Ambrose, *Lying to Be Perfect* (2010) opposite Poppy Montgomery, *Perfectly Prudence* (2011) opposite Jane Seymour and *The Thanksgiving House* (2013) opposite Emily Rose.

In 2006 Adam starred in Rogue Pictures feature film *Altered* (2006) written and directed by Eduardo Sánchez (*The Blair Witch Project* (1999)). His other feature credits include *Come Away with Me* (2005) opposite Mariangela Melato and *Final Sale* (2011) opposite Ivan Sergei and Laura Harris.

Adam lives in Los Angeles with his son Jackson.



Mark Collier – Cory

Mark Collier was born in Boynton Beach, Florida. He is of Danish, English, Irish and Choctaw ancestry. His father, a CPA, and his mother, a nurse, eventually moved the family to Ocala, Florida, where he spent most of his childhood. At age 10 Mark got his start in local theater productions. As he entered high school his focus shifted towards sports, and he excelled in wrestling and soccer. Mark attended Georgia Southern University where he was a member of the Sigma Chi Fraternity and graduated with a degree in Accounting. Shortly thereafter his desires turned back to acting, and at the age of 28 he moved to Los Angeles and began studying. While juggling three jobs as a bouncer, waiter, and Pilates instructor, he continued studying and became a member of the Blue Sphere Alliance theater company. After a few small roles and an appearance in a Dixie Chicks video, he got his break in 2002 when he was cast as the rebel-turned-good guy Mike Kasnoff in the long-running CBS daytime drama *As the World Turns* (1956). In 2003, Mark garnered a Soap Opera Digest nomination for outstanding newcomer. While working in New York, he began studying in a two-year Meisner program taught by William Esper, and he also attended the Actors Movement Studio. In 2005, he was a presenter at the The 31st Annual People's Choice Awards (2005). Mark Lives in Los Angeles, where he continues his training in the Traditional form of Wing Chun Kung Fu. He is a contributor and supporter of Free Arts for Abused Children and is also a lifetime member of the Surfrider Foundation.



Seth Braverman – Young Joshua

Seth Braverman is an actor, known for *Garage*, *Upstream* (2019) and *Olivia Dunkley: It Isn't Christmas* (2020).