



Trauma w/ Friends

PRESS KIT

SHORT FILM

2025/USA/ENGLISH/5:42 RUNNING TIME/16:9/STEREO/DRAMA/HORROR



“We don’t break the circle of trust,
we break the cycle of trauma.”



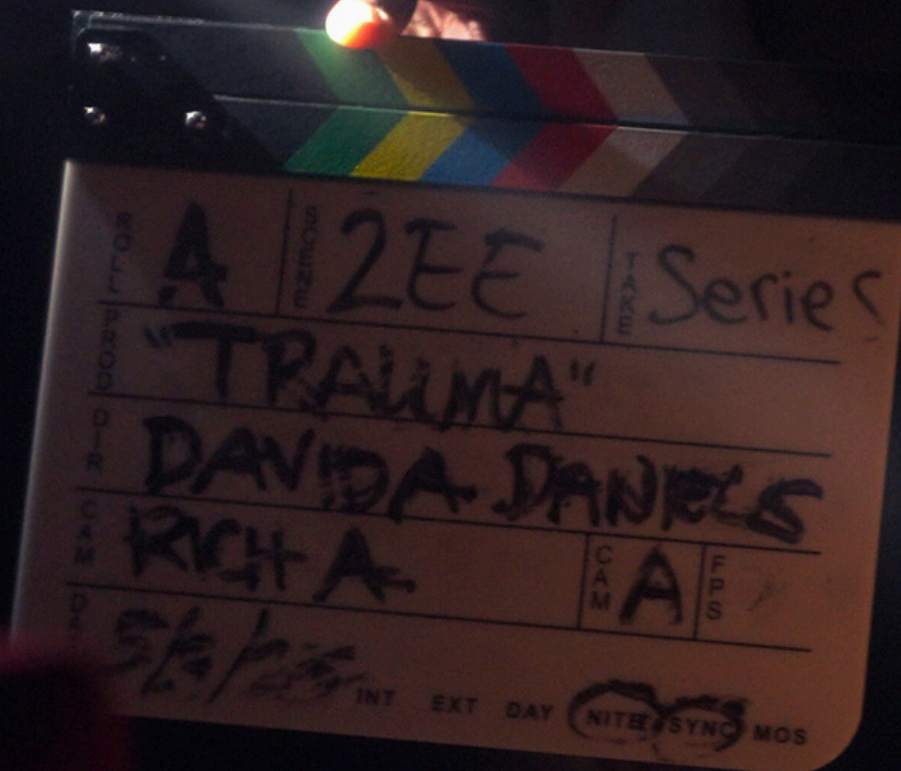
LOGLINE

A young woman, piecing her life back together, reluctantly meets up with childhood friends who target her in a game meant to dispel trauma, causing it to manifest with unintended consequences.

SYNOPSIS

As a child, Maya suffered the loss of her father and abandonment of childhood friends Everly, Daegan, and Helena. Several years later, Maya, broken and down on her luck, finds herself reluctantly returning to the fold for a girls' night and also at the center of a viral party game, "Trauma w/ Friends." While the intentions of the game are to dispel trauma and heal a chosen player, the group's ulterior motive backfires when reality collides with Maya's trauma world, which also comes with a reckoning.





STARRING

Allison von Hausen
Julie Schmid
Ilana Neirnberger
Virgie Poole

WRITTEN, PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY

David A. Daniels

PRODUCED BY

Anna Daniels
Marcus Araiza

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Dominic Lamboy

EDITOR/VFX

Anna Daniels

SOUND DESIGNER

Stephen Beacham
Anna Daniels

UNIT STILL PHOTOGRAPHER

Marcus Araiza

TRAILER





David A. Daniels

Writer/Director

BIO:

Daniels' career began as an office production assistant and post-production assistant for Fox Searchlight. That same year, he was selected as one of the first filmmakers to join Fox Searchlab which included a first-look deal with Searchlight, where he wrote, co-produced, and directed his first short film, "The Eleventh Hour," inspired by the "Twilight Zone" TV series and the films of director Stanley Kubrick.

As Daniels continued to hone his craft as a filmmaker, he went on to write and direct a feature-length comedy film, before gaining representation and two option deals for his "Red-Riding Hood" horror screenplay.

Daniels' latest accomplishments include winning top honor in the feature horror category for the 53rd Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition and finalizing post-production on two short films.

He is currently in pre-production on short film projects, "Mary Uncanny" and "Rain," with principal photography slated for early December and first quarter 2026, respectively.





Anna Daniels

Producer/Production Designer/Editor/VFX

BIO:

Anna Daniels started out as a Directing major at Biola University and continued on to New York Film Academy in their editing program. She worked on the post-production team at Google and as an in-house editor for Transvideo Studios. After spending a decade creating videos for Silicon Valley's top companies, her focus shifted to narrative film.

Anna serves as a writer, producer, editor, vfx, and colorist at Gold Hill Pictures. For her first feature length screenplay, "Yard Duties," she has received numerous contest placements including the 56th Nashville Film Festival.



Marcus Araiza

Producer/Unit Still Photographer

BIO:

Marcus Araiza is an award-winning commercial photographer, specializing in business branding and visual communications.

His illustrious career began at Sony Pictures and Columbia Tri-Star, and he later authored a creative fictional series for children's books.

As a film cinematographer, editor and actor since 2005, he then transitioned to producing independent films and partnering with David and Anna Daniels for over the past 25 years, working together on creative and outside the box indie films.



Dominic Lamboy

Director of Photography

BIO:

A Bay Area native, Dominic Lamboy is a passionate independent filmmaker and photographer whose creative journey began with a Bachelor's degree in Film & Electronic Arts from California State University, Long Beach, where he specialized in cinematography.

He built his early career producing and shooting short films and commercials, with works showcased at festivals including the Directors Guild of America, the Hollywood Black Film Festival, and by Fox Searchlight.

After a hiatus from filmmaking, Dominic reconnected with longtime collaborator David Daniels, reigniting his passion for storytelling through producing and cinematography. Today, he is once again fully immersed in the craft, rediscovering his love for the art of making films and bringing new stories to life with fresh vision and energy.



Stephen Beacham

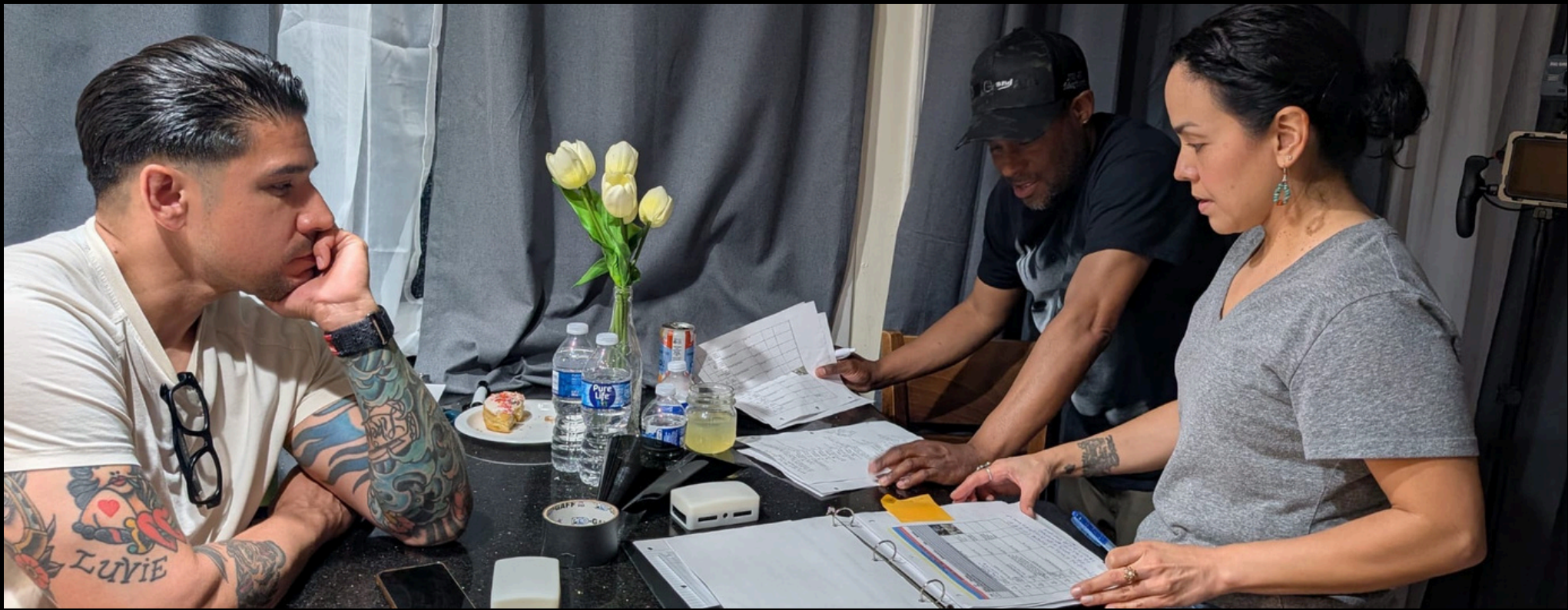
Sound Designer/Mixer

BIO:

Stephen Beacham is an award-winning video producer and host for top tech media publications including CNET, Mashable, and PCMag. As the Senior Manager of Video Programming at Ziff Davis, Stephen drives the development and execution of video content across multiple platforms and brands.

Before video, Stephen's roots were in music production and audio engineering where he worked with multi-platinum artists like Green Day, Smash Mouth, and Lenny Kravitz. Today, Stephen continues creating music as a producer, engineer and mixer but has been expanding into sound design and mixing for film and tv, building a resume of short horror films and psychological thrillers.





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

“Trauma w/ Friends” is my proof of concept for a low to mid budget feature film that examines succumbing to the chaos within and the loss of innocence when betrayed by those closest to us.

As a self-proclaimed weirdo who grew up in a broken home and was raised in a religious cult, albeit with loving care and support from my mother, I often sought to overcome my own sense of darkness (confusion; ignorance; a curiosity akin to the disbelief of God) and despair. Adventures outside with friends, books like the Berenstain Bears and choose your own adventures, film and TV, games, and toys all served my boundless imagination and fueled my desire for storytelling and filmmaking. I could throw a rock at almost any genre and pick a favorite film that in some way has inspired me and shaped my approach to the craft.

For “Trauma w/ Friends,” I wanted to create something more personal, relatable, with franchisability. The game of “Trauma w/ Friends” is meant to be this generation’s Bloody Mary or Ouija; a haunted but fun, childhood memory that could easily nestle its way into adulthood. However, players beware: the game is not without irony and a reckoning.

Hoping to subvert expectations, I chose to shoot the film with a similar temperament and aesthetic of Beth de Araújo’s, “Soft & Quiet,” fused with the 90’s classic, “Flatliners,” for the fun and games of the “trauma world.”



VIRGIE
POOLE

IMDb

ALLISON
VON HAUSEN

JULIE
SCHMID

IMDb

ILANA
NEIRNBERGER

IMDb



CAST





Over the following, the group toggles their flashlight OFF and ON, creating a haunting series of FLASHES:

EVERLY

As the facilitator, I will be your anchor in the real world and your safety net in the shadows. Three clicks to open the doorway so it can receive you. Three clicks to give you the sight. Three clicks to expel it and end the game. Tonight is all about manifesting and confronting your trauma shadow.

Daegan and Helena rest a hand on Maya's shoulders.

EVERLY

We don't break the circle of trust.
We break the cycle of trauma.

OTHERS

We don't break the circle of trust.
We break the cycle of trauma.

EVERLY

We don't let it overwhelm us.

OTHERS

We don't let it overwhelm us.

EVERLY

Within the dark is the light and
our way out.

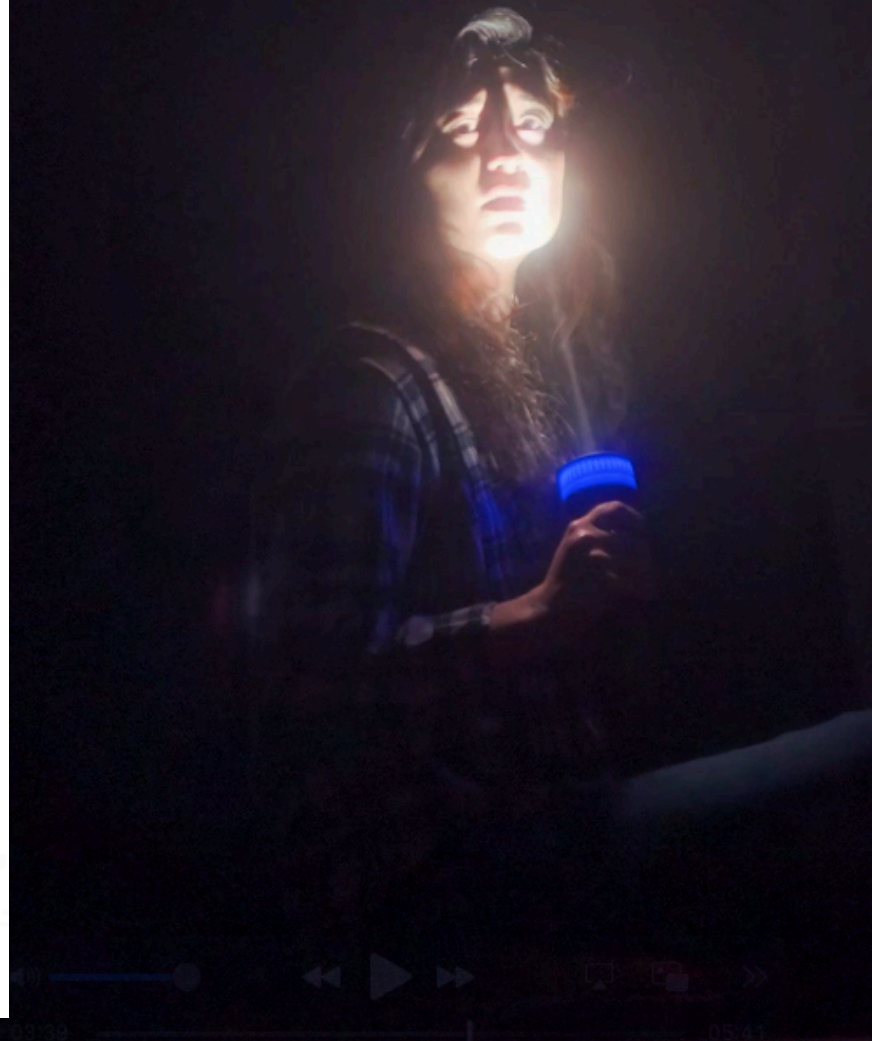
OTHERS

Within the dark is the light and
our way out.

A haunting silence follows and hangs, before Daegan and Helena erupt in ridiculous, over-the-top sobbing, "accepting and sharing Maya's trauma."

A door opens staring into a void, transcending her/us into...

TRAUMA WORLD





"We don't break the circle of trust,
we break the cycle of trauma."

CONTACT

FOR BOOKING INQUIRIES OR MEDIA CONTACT

goldhillpics@gmail.com

Trauma w/ Friends

GOLD HILL PICTURES PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH ATLAS STUDIOS PRO AND RIZING TIDE MEDIA

A FILM BY DAVID A. DANIELS "TRAUMA W/ FRIENDS" ALLISON VON HAUSEN JULIE SCHMID ILANA NIERNBERGER VIRGIE POOLE

CINEMATOGRAPHY DOMINIC LAMBOY EDITED BY ANNA DANIELS CO-PRODUCED BY DOMINIC LAMBOY STEPHEN BEACHAM TANYA ARAIZA RICHARD ALVARADO LAMAR COX

PRODUCED BY DAVID A. DANIELS ANNA DANIELS MARCUS ARAIZA WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY DAVID A. DANIELS

Gold Hill
PICTURES

