

No future is safe



BRIGHT EYE

Produced & Directed by Rio Miller

Written by Mackenzie Robin

Starring Mackenzie Robin and Lexi Fontaine

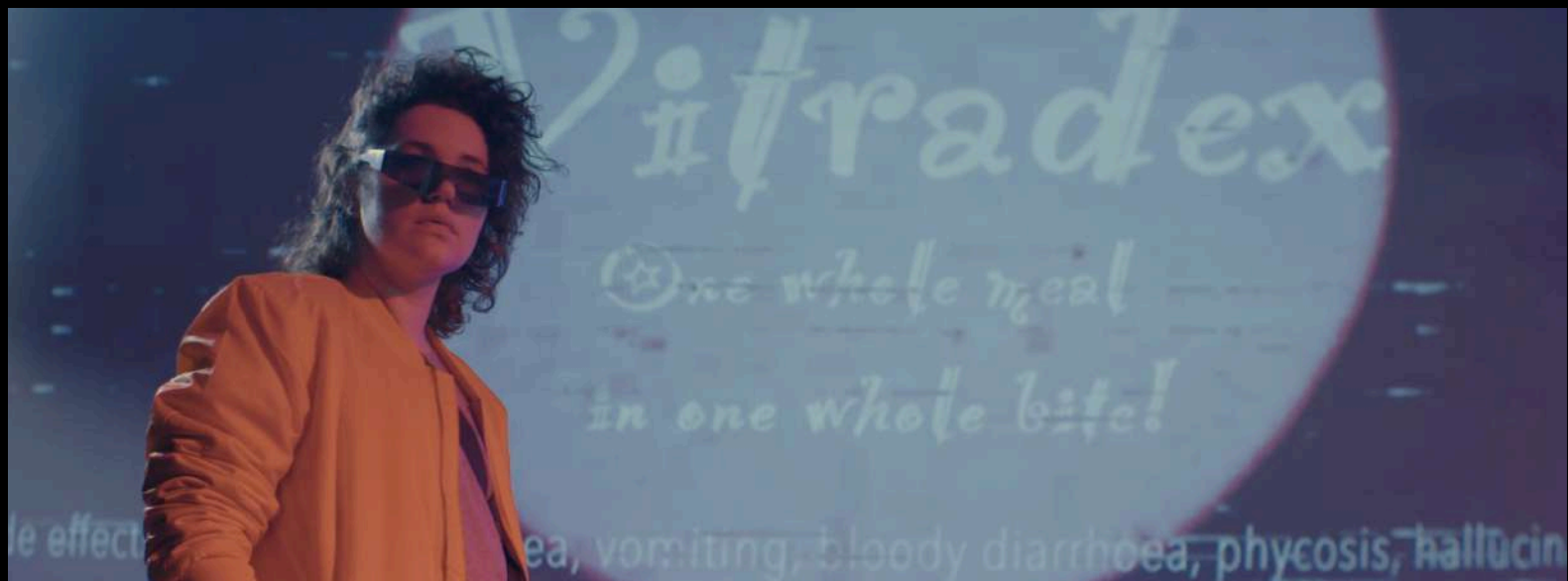
Produced by Jordan Barnes-Crouse, Karly Elyse, John Sobey

Executive Produced by Michael Berdan, Mackenzie Robin

Cinematography by Jordan Barnes-Crouse Production Design by Helena Ventosa Costume Design by Eve Partridge
Miniatures designed & constructed by John Sobey Visual Effects by Jordan Barnes-Crouse & Alex King

Music by Christopher MacMillan





Logline

Callie Jones is not your average IT tech. They're a bio-hacker, living in the cracks of their dystopian society and illegally hacking bionic implants. Careful. Methodical. Invisible... until one wrong phone call exposes them.

Synopsis

In the future... the lines between humanity and technology grow more razor-thin each day. Bioware and robotic implants known as Bright Eyes are as common to the everyman as a phone or wallet- the kind of tech Callie Jones specializes their skills in hacking and corrupting. They live a quiet life alone, with the exception of Fay, a friend whom they are quietly in love with.

But when an anonymous phone call requests their services, Callie inadvertently exposes herself to the city's cybernetic police force. Can Callie maintain their static existence within the cracks of this dystopian world or will they have to confront a system whose empathy grows colder each day?

Bright Eye is a unique vision of the future- exploring themes of transhumanism, our growing struggle for human connection, and love as an act against totalitarian forces.

RIO MILLER (they/them)

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Mackenzie Robin (they/them)

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Jordan Barnes-Crouse (he/him)

Cinematographer, VFX Artist, Producer
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Karly Elyse (he/him)

Co-Producer
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John Sobey (he/him)

Producer, Miniature Artist
johnsobey@gmail.com

Cast

Mackenzie Robin - Callie
Lexi Fontaine - Fay
Michael Berdan - The Officer
Leonardo Barragan - The chef
Paul Hendrix - The Droid

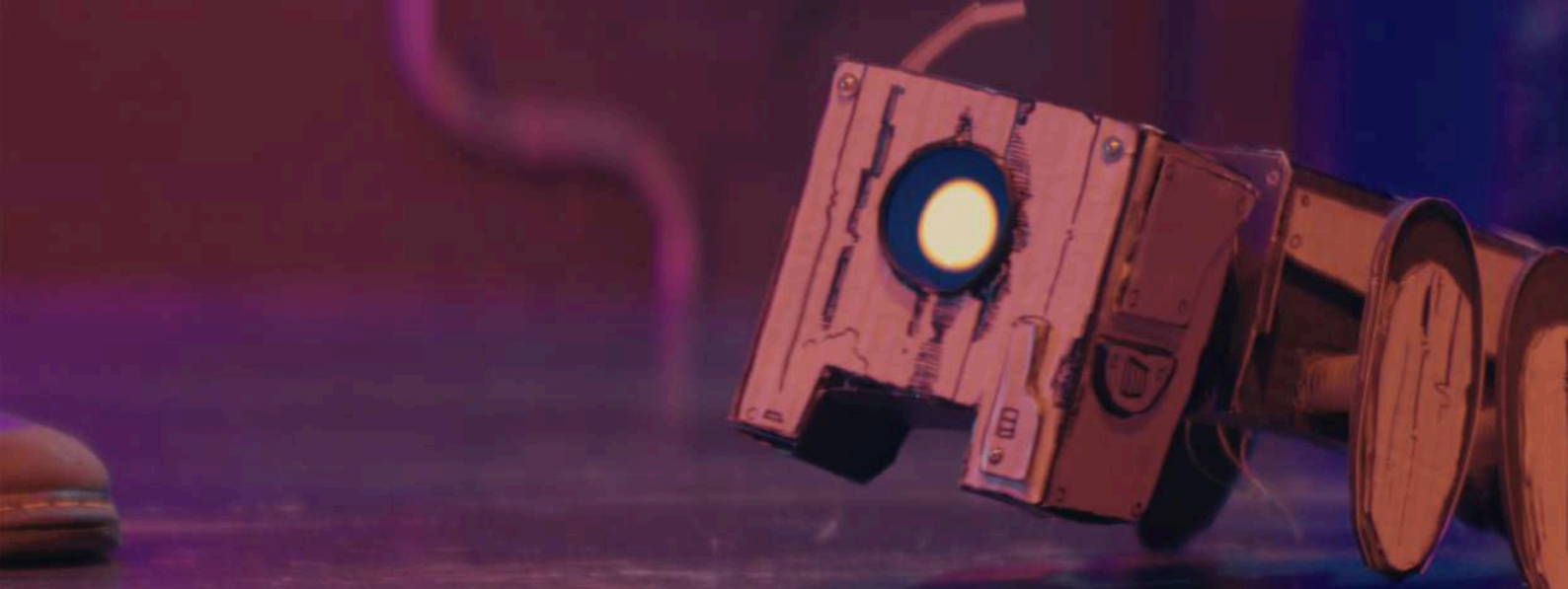
Title: Bright Eye

Genre: Sci-Fi, Thriller
Country: Canada
Production Year: 2026
Language: English
Duration: 20
Aspect Ratio: 2:39:1
Frame Rate: 24fps
Shooting format: Blackmagic Pocket Cinema
Camera 4K with Blazar Remus anamorphic lenses
Exhibition Format: 4k DCP
Sound:

Screenplay Awards:

Finalist - Los Angeles International Sci-Fi Film Festival, 2023
Finalist - Genreblast, 2022
Finalist - The New York Independent Film Festival, 2023
Quarter Finalist - Vancouver Badass Film Festival, 2023
Selected - New York Independent Film Festival, 2023
Selected - Merced Queer Film Festival, 2022





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The best way I could describe *Bright Eye* is that it's a psychedelic dream pool of sci-fi comic book, 1980s genre flicks, and queer fantasia. It was made with the idea that we could create the Queer Metropolis of the Future, a world that predicted trans-humanism and the horror of police surveillance. I believe the film had gotten more timely as we drew nearer to its creation— the re-election of Donald Trump and the ICE raids that followed sent a cold shiver down the spine of everyone I knew. It felt important to tell a queer cyber-punk romance that had the spirit of trans resistance against a totalitarian society.

Bright Eye is about Callie Jones, a hacker who lives in complete isolation with the noticeable exception of their friend Fay, who they've been in love with for quite some time. They make a living taking up gigs as a hacker, illegally intercepting the bio-ware that is so prevalent in the city. Callie is not the kindest person, nor are they the most self-aware of themselves. They are rude, abrasive, and insecure in many ways. They are also a person with a brilliant mind who wants to be there for the people they care for. They're a diamond in the rough with a heart that glows and Fay recognizes it. Fay is herself an outsider, but unlike Callie, she desires fitting into society as best as she can— even if it means dating a cop. Callie wants to be with Fay, yearns to be in her arms, but never takes that leap. What are they so afraid of? Vulnerability? How can one be vulnerable when you've done nothing but hide for most of your life? It's that tension, that romance, that sits at the heart of *Bright Eye*. It's a love story first and foremost— the kind that believes it can save us all.

Mackenzie Robin is the star and writer of this project. Anyone who knows Mackenzie [Max] knows that they take their work very seriously— they have a very strong vision that makes them a distinct voice in their own right. So when they told me that I could direct their short script *Bright Eye*, I didn't take it lightly. The thing both of us have in common is how personal our writing is and to have another artist come in to interpret that work requires a lot of vulnerability and trust which I was honoured by.

Upon reading it, I found myself reminiscing over my early memories watching and reading science fiction throughout childhood. You see, I never had a stable home. We constantly moved throughout Alberta and I never felt secure at one place at a time. There was this intense feeling of isolation I felt being biracial and living in communities where that wasn't common. I sought an escape through my dad's VHS tapes. I watched *Terminator*, *Aliens*, *Blade Runner*, and *Star Wars* religiously. I read comic books and made my own— studying artists like Jack Kirby and Moebius.

To me, Science fiction works best when it centres on the outsider. Our very first science fiction story, *Frankenstein*, goes to great lengths to show how ostracized the monster is upon being let loose by his creator. As a queer and biracial person, my connection to Sci-Fi remains deeply rooted in my identity. I wanted to make something that spoke to that feeling and harken back to the electrifying feeling of awe and terror that I felt watching these movies at a young age and make it my own.

Production on this film was a whirlwind. We had set out to make a fully lived in world on a tight budget and complex special effects. I won't mince words when I say that my DoP and VFX supervisor, Jordan Barnes-Crouse, is an absolute genius. We developed a rear-projection technique that saw us taking my concept art, compositing it into a 3D space in blender, and then projecting it against a screen for our actors to perform against. It was a unique look that felt dreamlike and painterly. Once we had the technique down, we had to build a team.

To make the effect feel seamless, we brought in a talented production designer, Helena Ventosa, who was able to dress our sets using thrifted items and furniture. Our costume designer, Eve Partridge, took the comic book aesthetic we were building and found a visual identity to each and every character. She helped them pop out amidst our neon-lit future.

This was not an easy film to make. We shot for long days, bumped into several logistical and budgetary problems, had to recast someone 2 days before our first shoot day. What kept us going was the belief that we made something uncompromising, visually interesting, and unlike anything else we ever thought we'd have the luxury of making. We made sacrifices and showed up for each other. I'm proud to be a part of the team that believed in my vision and did some of their best work for it.

—Rio Miller



WRITER'S STATEMENT

I had been waiting for a story like *Bright Eye* for so long, that I eventually had to give up and write it myself. The cyberpunk genre is famous for tackling questions about transhumanism, surveillance, and individual choice. Still, I had yet to see any of this through a queer or gender non-conforming perspective. The love story between non-binary hacker Callie and trans fashion designer Fay offers two opposite driving forces for the stances many queer people take. Callie wants to abandon the system entirely, undermining and overthrowing it by any means necessary.

The reality of these lofty ambitions is brought into focus by Callie's unconfessed love for Fay, who has the more achievable goal of trying to be as comfortable as possible in her society. This dichotomy echoes staple cyberpunk themes, as well as real decades-old debates between people in queer communities. Do you try to be accepted by the society you were born into in the interest of comfort and relative safety, or do you try to radically change the bedrock of the world, creating great discomfort in the hopes of eventually making things better? *Bright Eye* doesn't claim to finalize this debate, but it does assert the one thing I know to be true: Philosophical ideas shatter in the face of love, and love is how we will save each other.

—Mackenzie Robin



Cast Bios

Mackenzie Robin — Writer, "Callie Jones"



Mackenzie Robin (they/them) is a writer, director, and actor based in the coast salish territories of western Canada. A former student of Capilano University's Motion Picture Arts Program, their screenplays have been finalists at the New York Independent Film Festival, the LA International Sci Fi film festival, and Genre Blast Film Festival.

Lexi Fontaine — "Fay"



"Lexi Fontaine is a multidisciplinary trans and two-spirit artist based in Vancouver, British Columbia. You can usually catch her working on an elaborate illustration, a queer film project, or whatever else is currently inspiring her. She likes her movies weird and her music loud."

HOD BIOS

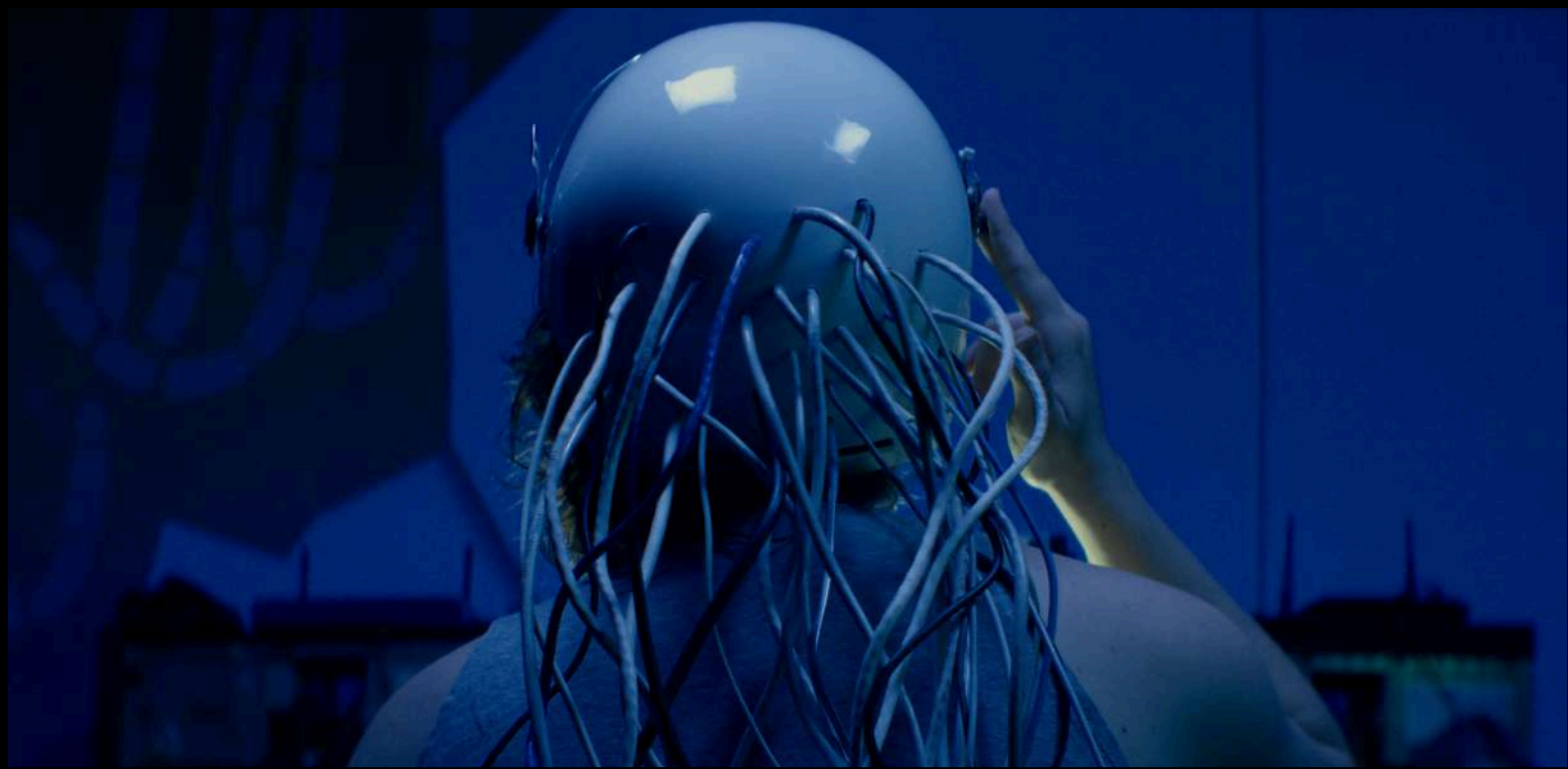
Rio Miller — Director, Producer

Rio is an independent non-binary filmmaker based in Vancouver, Canada. Beginning their career as an illustrator, Rio has brought a painterly approach to their cinematic craft and has blurred the line between live-action/ practical effects driven filmmaking and 2D animation and comic book visuals. Their stories often centre around ordinary queer folks in extraordinary conditions, leaning heavily into surrealism, horror, or sci-fi.

A former student at Capilano University, Rio has explored creating high-concept stories on low-budget scales. In 2020, Rio's short film *Reverse* gained recognition when it was featured on Warner Bros. Canada's social media platforms as part of their #inspiredbyTENET campaign. Building on this momentum, in 2021, Rio was awarded the Canada Council for the Arts concept-to-realization grant to bring their feature film debut, *Much Ado*, to life: a musical romance inspired by William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Afterwards, their short film, *Neon Blue*, won the best director award at the East Van Film Festival.

Jordan Barnes-Crouse — Cinematographer, Producer

Jordan Barnes-Crouse is a director, editor and cinematographer based in Vancouver, Canada. Graduated from Langara College's Digital Film Production program in 2008, he later co-founded Off World Pictures in 2014 with special effects makeup artist Carolyn Williams to pursue their passion for genre filmmaking. Recent directing credits include *'Dancing in Ashes'*, produced for Cineworks' *Back Down the Highway* anthology; *'The Sleep of Endymion'*, one of ten Storyhive funded music video projects in 2015; *'Ghost Can'*, 2016 Zoscar winner at the Rio Theatre's *Dead on Film Fest*, and *'Time Heals No Wounds'*, winner of Best Local Short at the 2018 Vancouver Badass Film Festival.



CREDITS

Additional Cast

Ramen Chef — Leonardo Barragan
Police Officer 1 — Michael Berdan
Police Officer 2 — Nile Whidden
Police Droid — Paul Hendrix
Voice Over — Ivy Basquiat
Extras — Bella Lopez, Gavin Cameron, Sarah Shephard, Rory Hoffman.

Producer, Miniature Artist — John Sobey
Producer — Karly Elyse
Producer — Michael Berdan

1st Assistant Director — Joe Bossy
2nd Assistant Director — Leonardo Barragan

Camera Department
1st AC — Rory Hoffman, Elliot James Fisher
2nd AC — Christian Zakharchuk, Shawna Ivy

Sound — Elliot James Fisher, Connor Brown

Art Department
Production Designer — Helena Ventosa
Costume Designer — Eve Partridge
Set Dressers — Jasmine Provins, Nathan Doll

Script Supervisors — Yu Ching Yau, David Trotter

Make-Up — Nathalie Hossein Pour

Editor — Marlio Herrera Lira
Sound Design & Music — Christopher MacMillan

VFX supervisor — Jordan Barnes-Crouse
3D compositor — Alex King



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Liv Ingram, Bruno Trivelli, Martyna Tyzko, Colette McIsaac, Dan Small, Naomi Sawatsky.

Filmed at Beaumont Studios, Cineworks Studios, Showpony Studios

Screenplay Awards:

Finalist — Los Angeles International Sci-Fi Film Festival, 2023

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LINKS

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