

“Red” A Psychological Thriller

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One Comment

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“Red” is a sit-on-the-edge-of-your-seat, psychological thriller directed by Seth Panman of [Panmansojian](#); produced by Jason Abrams of [Time Will Tell Productions](#). It is a brilliant indie moulded by bright new filmmakers whose work is just now becoming familiar amongst general audiences.

Seth Panman previously both directed and produced 2008’s Toyota Camry campaign commercial, Aim to Please. He also directed commercials for Craine’s Business Weekly, IT New York, and a tabloid show for AMC. Various music videos credits include the official “Hillary in the House 08,” a cooperative project with Mr. Abrams. Seth was recipient of L Magazine’s Best Short Film Director, 2006.

Producer Abrams, also a performer, is best known for acting appearances in AMC’s Mad Men, HBO’s Flight of the Conchords, and the film What Happens in Vegas.

MYSTERY WITH A TWIST

The film’s story takes place during New York’s “Fleet Week”. In a hitchcockesque tradition, we follow four different characters through a classic New York story to a stunning twist. “Red” defines experimental film making with the director’s unique approach of psychotherapy-meets-cinematography. It is loosely based on a true story which took place in 2003.



Seth Left; Jason Right

Fleet Week in the city is a time when sailors dock and get leave to explore, let out frustration, get soused, and, what else? Have as much sex as possible. “Red” is a social profile of a chunk of history where folks use power and status to abuse and rob society of its purity, from corporate scandal where 401k’s were destroyed, to unjust wars to line the pockets of the elite and very wealthy. The film takes place within one weekend as two female characters, Brandy and Scarlett, who had just come to New York, find themselves in its “worst” neighborhood. Both women are over the top in every respect, from talk to body language, and they reveal themselves as materialistic and self absorbed.

Scarlett has a fiancé in the Navy but is heart-set on cheating to bring in the New Year. Brandy is also out to get her own sailor boy toy for the night but spends most of her time fighting with Scarlett over lack of both morals and loyalty to Jake, her fiancé. Meanwhile, Jake is stuck upon the aircraft carrier at dock, having been ordered to ship’s watch by the captain. The irony is that Jake is the closest he has been to his Scarlett in the last year, yet is still months away from being able to see her.

The focus shifts from Brandy to Scarlett to Jake ... until Red, a delusional psychopath with symptoms including flashbacks of his own abuse and torment as a youth, is seen staring into a hotel bathroom mirror. Red would seem to represent three aspects of abuse: first, failure of the abused to deal with it in a meaningful fashion; second, those who go on to abuse others; and third, getting away with crimes of abuse. Red reflects those in power in society and what has happened with abuse in both military/industrial and bureaucratic governmental levels.

Once Red’s character is introduced the plot’s development is realized and momentum is increased, taking the audience on what some viewers have called a mesmerizing and impacting voyage. The story now twists and turns alternatively between Red, Jake and the two girls as they head towards celebrating New Year’s.

Scarlett and Brandy argue bitterly after their long day shopping and not having enough left for a lock for the busted door. It ends in a coin toss which ultimately decides the fate of Scarlett. She decides to stay to keep an eye on the apartment to protect the day’s expensive purchases. Brandy goes on to attend the New Year’s Eve celebrations at which time an intruder enters the apartment. It is Red and he ends up raping and killing Scarlett.

He is led to the apartment by a series of flashbacks reminding him of the place he grew up, and one specific visit bringing him back to the time when he was abused by his mother. The mother and Scarlett share similar physical attributes, offering him the trigger to commit the violent acts. Rape and murder mark a scene that is the turning point in the film. From here the story takes us through the night to follow New Year’s revelers, and finally back to the deck of the ship in an intense scene with Jake and Red at the bow. At this point comes a heavy sting from the tragedy that has evolved before our eyes.

Audiences are left with a feeling of closure. But there are also anger, fear, and recognition of the ability of those in power to escape blame. In addition, we are made conscious of the results of the failures to deal with abuse.

Credits: Press Kit at Event

Red’s cast of characters -

- Adelcida Wilson, winner of the 2008 Estrella Award for Best Host
- Dylan Riley Snyder, currently playing young “Tarzan” on Broadway
- Romy Nordlinger, featured on Comedy Central, a veteran of shorts and features and introducing...Courtney Rost

A GRAND OPENING

The event Premier was simply fantastic. Over 300 people arrived to see this film; some were even turned away. Reactions were mixed, both positive and negative, depending on the person, because it involves abuse, rape, and evokes deep emotional sentiments. The cast did a great job in portraying scenes via the filmmakers’ eyes. Shades of Oliver Stones’, U-turn, mixed with Paul Haggis’ Crash, with a splash of Tarantino mixed in, are present. Panman, as director, brings a new style to the table. Whereas most would use blood and gore to scare people, Seth uses real life, pure and simple. If you like watching psychological thrillers it’ll be great for you. The last one of this genre like this was a Hollywood film called After Life. Among others, it was star-studded with Christina Ricci, Justin Long, and Liam Neeson. “Red” will be released to general audiences in the United States soon.

An experimental film, “Red” was created from just twelve pages of script and a meager five pages of dialogue. Nevertheless, it blossomed into a 50 minute work of cinema made to play out like a Twilight Zone Episode in length and style. The screenplay was inspired by a project which Mr. Panman executed for an Israeli company in which he directed nearly a thousand testimonials of ten-minutes duration about people’s episodes of shock and distress; trauma, psychological, emotional, personal and financial in nature. That project formed the basic foundation for a website geared to help people overcome such massive strife and hardship.

It is significant that the premiere of this roller coaster mystery took place in the heart of New York, as many filmmakers seek to promote and premier their offerings at the film festivals. Parts of “Red” were shot on the Intrepid, the war craft, air and space museum ship on the Hudson River in New York. That’s a location incredibly hard to access, especially for film making, so the setting is rather an added feather in the film’s proverbial cap.

The premier party went on to the wee hours, people having loved the movie, with laughing and real bonding as a crowd; truly a fantastic event. Although it was originally planned as a networking evening, it turned out and became a very successful opening after party. The filmmakers are not stopping, they say, and have already begun work on creating music videos to be premiered as early as next month.

MULTI-TASKING CAREER

In the midst of what has been called (by some,) an economic crisis, pursuing a career in acting (or other artistically inspired fields of endeavor) might qualify as a grandiose fantasy mission. However, the evolving career of Jason Abrams is evidence that living the dream is not far from reality at all. Upcoming and on the rise, he is making his way to the top of the entertainment food chain, one (or more) films at a time.

Amid two extremes, actors who are either famously rich or those auditioning between work shifts are people who really make our entertainment world tick. Supporting roles, commercials, and bits in features are the work of actors who are not hounded by paparazzi and have made solid careers doing what they do best. Tall, lanky, red-haired, you might have glimpsed at Abrams on the Bravo hit series Mad Men as David Cohen. A Brooklyn resident with a background in the Woodstock theatre and music scene, he is often to be found managing his own self-reliant affairs and agenda.

Jason’s aggressive approach has paid off. An initial break came when he landed a small part in War of the Worlds. He has appeared on the hit series Sopranos, Law and Order, and Rescue Me on FX. Also, he was cast in HBO’s hit comedy, “Flight of the Concords.” This actor is equipped with substantial theatre experience. But don’t be fooled — this young talent has more to offer than just the ability to get into character. He believes it is important for actors to have more than talent for acting. He is the president of his own production company, Time Will Tell Productions.

“Producing has proven to be an enlightening experience in the entertainment industry. For me, I’ve been fortunate enough to experiment with various projects and learn what works and what doesn’t,” Abrams says. Wherever the project leads, Jason will follow, backing up his efforts with consistent physical presence and sound mental state. “I’m always prepared to talk business. No matter where I am, what time, or how I’m feeling at the moment, I’ll have the ability to turn a switch and produce. It’s a prerequisite for success on the production end of the entertainment industry.”

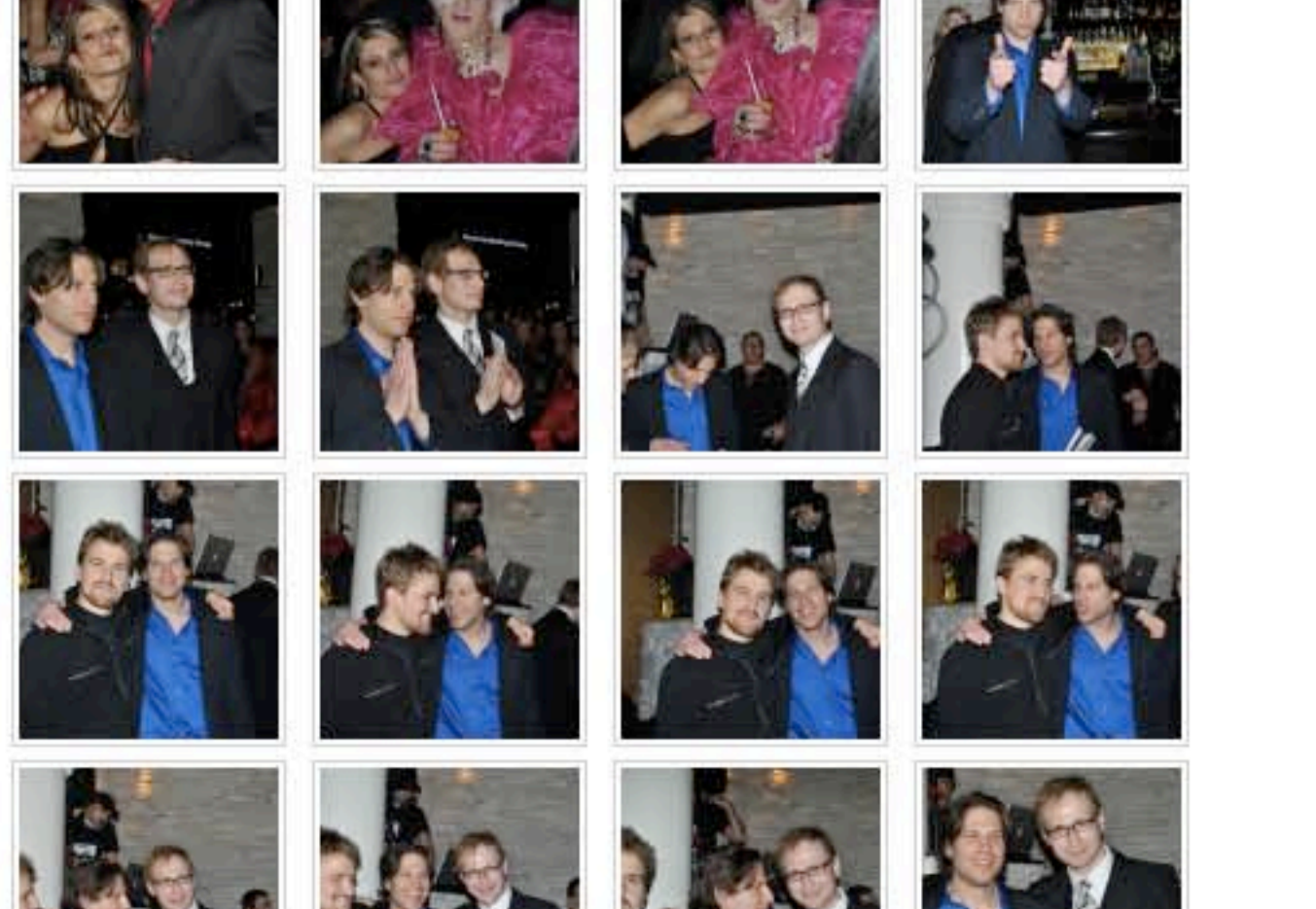
TEAMWORK

With this full agenda, collaboration with Seth Panman is also on the horizon. Panman will be directing Jason’s next film production, also based on a true story from 1993. It will be a work featuring four upstate New Yorkers set to graduate high school. “The boys, each from very different backgrounds, decide that they need some adventure before graduation and embark on a cross-country road trip to Colorado. That’s where it all begins,” said Mr. Panman. Thanks to the ever-useful YouTube, some of Abram’s projects are readily available. At any time you can catch him in Mad Men, Flight of the Concords, or a segment that has been pitched to MTV, entitled Sexy Jewish Rapper. The only way to tell if you’ll like what you see (and you will) is to go check it out.

As Jason puts it, “I’m very thankful for the opportunities I’ve been given. With various projects in the works, Time Will Tell Productions is quite busy. I produce films that are unique and powerful; often the same projects I seek to act in. Thus far, rewards have been beyond immense. As for the future... “time will tell.””

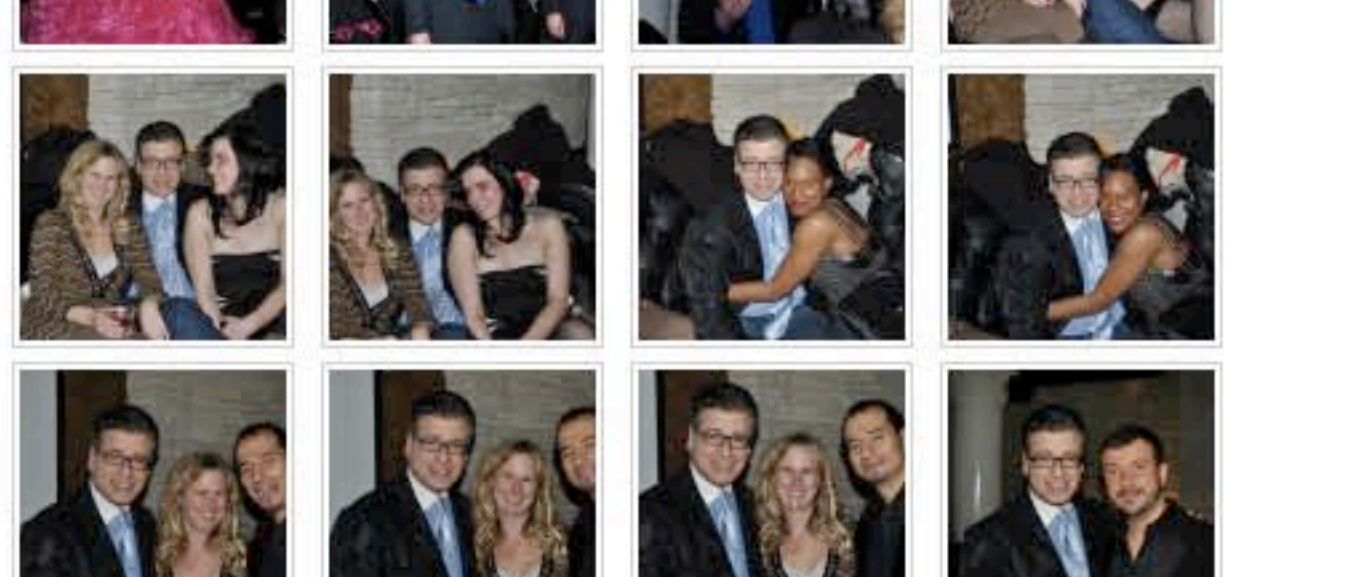
Credits: <http://www.buzzine.com/2008/11/jason-abrams-actor-and-more%E2%80%A6/> Candi Sterling

The event was sponsored in part by [KROL VODKA](#). Krol Vodka is connected to events and venues from snowboarding and extreme sports to Rappers and Ceo’s of Fortune 500 companies. Special thanks to Rich Chianese of Krol Vodka.



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Editorial Credits to Larry Genik and David Paul Rubenstein.

Some pictures of the party:

