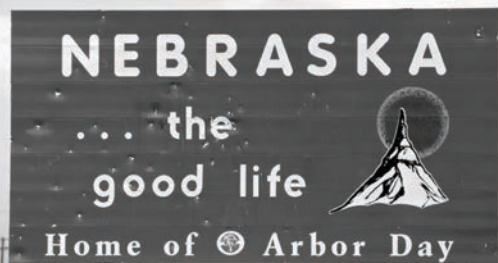


# DAYS IN THE WAKE

a feature film by Dina Fiasconaro





MIDWEST, 2010





**After his wife dies, JESSE is left with six young children and an adult daughter, KYLIE, who helps make ends meet for the family.**

When living conditions deteriorate,  
there is nowhere left to turn.





Jesse gathers the children while Kylie is at work, puts them on a bus, and abandons them at a Safe Haven hospital.

**Kylie returns home to find her entire family missing,  
and sets out to find them.**



# FROM THE DIRECTOR

Ten years ago, I read a news article about a father who used a temporary loophole in the Nebraska Safe Haven law to abandon his nine children on the doorstep of a hospital. It has haunted and stayed with me since. As an artist and mother, the psychology behind this man's action— was it a selfless act or a selfish one? — is fascinating, dramatic and cinematic.

**DAYS IN THE WAKE** addresses themes related to childhood, motherhood, family, psychology and sociology, and is a coming of age story for Kylie. The film is also very much about the younger children — their relationship to one another, their resiliency, their future, and their willingness to forgive their father for his actions. It focuses on the psychological and social aspects of this family's story, while touching on some of the larger social issues faced by many families in our country. The film strives to present the complexities of Jesse and Kylie's experience raising many children in a socio-economically depressed community – the maze of social services that Kylie is forced to navigate, the way she is ping-ponged back and forth between administrators, and the daunting hoops she must jump through to gain information are a realistic portrayal of the obstacles many American families face, especially in a time of restricted access to basic necessities such as affordable health-care and sustainable jobs.

I don't have answers to the many complex social issues the film explores, but I hope that the characters' actions and emotions resonate with the audience in a way that interrogates existing conditions for American families living in poverty and incites dialogue towards social change.





**DAYS IN THE WAKE** is bittersweet in tone, inspired by the documentaries *Rich Hill* and *October Country*, and narrative films such as *Shotgun Stories*, *Martha Marcy May Marlene*, *Old Joy*, *Winter's Bone* and *We the Animals*. These films give voice to those ordinarily without one, and quietly convey the pain and complexities of struggling individuals and families. The script is based on actual events, so its connection to documentary film relates to my desire to tell a story that feels authentic, gritty and alive.

This informs the aesthetic look of the film— a loose, flowing, hand-held style often seen in documentaries. Sound design will also be naturalistic/realistic. Quiet when characters are contemplative, loud when the chaos of the family crashes in. Tone will be reflected visually via muted, de-saturated palettes - brown wood paneling, dried out landscapes, layers of grime on buses, houses, people. This world is dirty, depressing and relentless, but it is also full of vitality, perseverance and hope for a brighter future.

The film is additionally influenced by musician Amanda Palmer, who addresses the darker emotional issues of teenage life in her songs, alt country singer Will Oldham, whose songs paint pictures of lonesome characters in cinematic landscapes and Matt Eich, a photographic essayist whose work relates to “memory, family, community, and the American condition.”



# CASTING COMPS



# KYLIE

daughter/19



Hailee Steinfeld

Danielle Macdonald

Kaitlyn Dever

# JESSE

father/36



Jeremy Allen White

James Ransone

Kentucker Audley

# COURTNEY & KRISTEN

twin siblings/12



# ESPIE

sibling/10



# CHEYENNE

sibling/7



# TEENY

sibling/6



# LUCKY

baby/1





# JEAN

mother (deceased)/36





**MOOD BOARDS**







PLACES







**COMP FILMS**



WINTER'S BONE



WE THE ANIMALS



SHOTGUN STORIES



RICH HILL



MARTHA MARCY MAY MARLENE



OCTOBER COUNTRY



MUD

# THE FILMMAKERS



**DIRECTOR/WRITER**

**DINA FIASCONARO** is a Baltimore screenwriter and film director, named a finalist for the 2018 Baker Artist Award. Her short film, *Commercial for the Queen of Meatloaf*, was funded by the Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund in Film and Media at Johns Hopkins University and has screened at over 20 festivals. Dina completed *Days in the Wake* as a resident at Dorland Mountain Arts Colony and Stowe Story Labs. Her films have screened at a variety of venues and film festivals, including the Baltimore Museum of Art, and she is a recipient of the 'Generation Next' screenwriting grant. Dina has an MFA in film directing from Columbia University and a BS in TV, Radio and Film from Syracuse University. She is a member of Film Fatales and co-founder of the Baltimore Women's Media Alliance, working towards gender parity in the film industry.



**PRODUCER**

**STACIE JONES GENTZLER** is a producer with over 15 years of experience in film. She served as Unit Production Manager on the Oscar-nominated *Margin Call*, starring Jeremy Irons, Kevin Spacey, Zachary Quinto and Demi Moore. Stacie also served as UPM on *The Trouble With Bliss*, starring Michael C. Hall and Oscar winner Brie Larson, and *Toe to Toe*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and stars Sonequa Green from *The Walking Dead*.



**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

**SHANNON PALMER** is a Baltimore native who uses her unique vision to tell powerful stories in a visually striking way. She is continually inspired by the human condition, and strives to subtly create a spark of intimacy between her subjects and the audience. She enjoys working on a wide variety of projects, including narratives, commercials, music videos, branded content, fashion films and documentaries. Shannon has shot for many brands including Gap, Girl Scouts, Jordan, Planned Parenthood, Toyota, GNC and ESPN, and is a member of the International Collective of Female Cinematographers.



**PRODUCTION DESIGNER**

**LESLIE GRAY** is a multidisciplinary artist based in Baltimore. Her portfolio consists of experimental digital photography and traditional 16mm film works as well as production design. Working with local filmmakers, Leslie has taken the role of art director, set dresser and assistant to the production designer.



**EDITOR**

**JULIA GOLONKA** is a Baltimore-based cinematographer and editor with a degree in Film & Video from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her documentary work has covered a diverse range of topics, including incarceration, burlesque, and *Anatomy of Wings*, a film ten years in the making about an after-school program that became a family. She is a Senior Editor at a Baltimore-based production company, where she has created work for clients such as TruTV, Colgate, and PBS.



# CONTACT

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