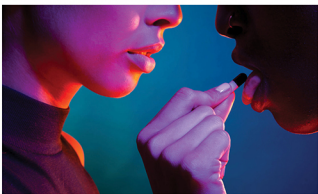


B A D
H E A D |
L O O K
B O O K

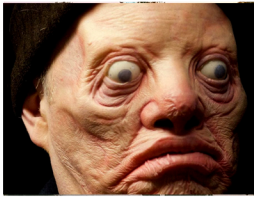


LOGLINE

A group of misfits and street prophets, living in the periphery of a major American suburb, prepare for the imminent apocalypse and access to a higher dimension. Unbeknownst to them, an enemy agent has infiltrated their group with violent intentions to prevent their ascension.

STREET PROPHETS
LIVING PERIPHERY
IMMINENT APOCALYPSE
HIGHER DIMENSION
VIOLENT ASCENSION





SYNOPSIS

Bad Head follows a group of irreverent outcasts as they share their views on history, theology, and society. We travel alongside them, from sunrise to sunrise, as they prepare for the apocalypse: collecting garbage and consumer waste for a toxic stew they will drink at the culmination of the night while awaiting the arrival of an alien deity. As the film progresses, tensions build as to what exactly will transpire. Is it all a mass delusion? A cult suicide? Or have they really found a portal to pass through space and time and reach a higher realm? We, the camera eye, bear witness to it all, as an anonymous first-person cipher without agency or voice.

We meet each of these mesmerizing and iconoclastic characters via a non-stop, rapid-fire series of monologues. The Preacher opens the film with his warped retelling of The Book of Genesis' creation story, the Professor compares the present moment to the eruption of the Bubonic Plague in Europe, and Bob the Nose boasts of his ability to locate valuables hidden in the trash using only his sense of smell, while also struggling with fears that he's wasted his unique talent. Annie-Jane envisions a new matriarchal society, while Undercover Jim confides to us that he is a CIA operative scheming to obliterate the mission and throw the others in prison. Each believes themselves to be the ruler of their own domain and master of their personal reality; each stands tall, confident in what they know to be true, as they vehemently offer their own history and personal philosophy directly to the camera.

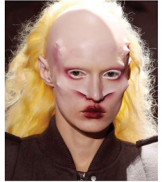
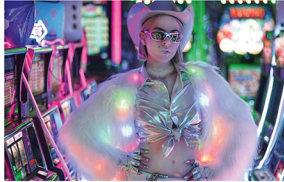
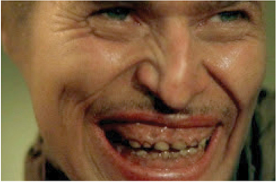
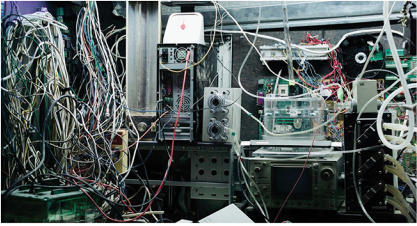
GARBAGE
OUTCASTS



TOXIC



ICONOCLAST
SUNRISE TO SUNRISE
CONSUMER WASTE
BEAR WITNESS



DIRECTORS STATEMENT

This film is an allegory about the fractured zeitgeist of 21st century America and an attempt to channel the trauma of living in a post-truth age. As our culture becomes more volatile and “truth” becomes more elusive and weaponized, people across the ideological spectrum oscillate between fascism and nihilism, convinced that the government and media lie, that those with differing views are evil or insane, and that history is malleable. As our divisions are fed through the widening fabric of technology, we become increasingly isolated, paranoid, and afraid.

And yet somehow, when I take it all in, I see beauty and humor—a wild, chaotic collage of color and noise and deep humanity.

I grew up in Tallahassee, Florida, but I have lived in Baltimore most of my adult life. I have always been surrounded by wild, contradictory, confusing people, full of eccentricity, free-spirited with a fervent anti-authoritarian vein. I’ve had no shortage of larger-than-life personalities among my immediate family and close friends. Often labeled by mainstream, capitalist culture as outsiders or freaks, or disregarded completely, these folks contain precarious truths about America, which vibrate through their words.

Listening can be a radical act. So can seeing. Through an immersive approach to camera, sound, and production design, I hope to create intimate contact between the audience and this radical “other”, inspiring empathy, as well as a deep questioning of dominant narratives, Western exceptionalism, and the normalcy of a hegemonic, individualistic, or nihilistic, worldview. *Bad Head* will offer a tableau of marvelously unhinged characters, each assured of their moral and intellectual superiority, woven together into a psychedelic tapestry teeming with dark comedy, formal audacity, and lots of love.

In his book *Subjective Realist Cinema*, Matthew Campora posits that for a film to truly represent the experience of being alive it must incorporate the instinctive and irrational inner worlds of the mind, memory, and dreams. Much of my previous work has attempted to articulate these hidden, subjective spaces while exploring the collective unconscious of the United States. In Mike Kelley's installations and videos, I find a critique of American ritual and unfettered late capitalism that inspires my practice. Performance and text are important elements in both our work, perhaps guided by William Burroughs' assertion that, “language is a virus from outer space”. I respond to the “clusterfuck” or “trash” aesthetics of artists engaging with the subconscious through ephemera and cultural detritus, like Kelley, John Waters, Harmony Korine, Jonah Freedman and Justin Lowe, but I also draw inspiration from the elegant, analog investigations of filmmakers like Maya Deren and Stan Brakhage.

Bad Head will continue my long-standing close collaborative relationship with composer Dan Deacon, who has scored such feature films as *Rat Film*, *Strawberry Mansion*, and *All Light, Everywhere*, as well as my short films *Skin of Man and Manger*. Matt Porterfield, an experienced filmmaker in his own right (*Putty Hill*, *I Used to Be Darker*, *Sollers Point*), will produce. Tyler Davis will shoot, and Albert Birney will edit, respectively. Their last feature, *Strawberry Mansion*, premiered at Sundance in 2021. Lydia Milano (*IATSE Local 487*) will head the art department and Matt Davies (*Studio Unknown*) will design the sound. I recently collaborated with all six of these artists on a proof-of-concept for *Bad Head*, and we are excited to embark on this ambitious feature together.







TACO



MALE (SIXTIES, ANY ETHNICITY). SCRUFFY, MIDDLE-AGED. HE WEARS A THIN WHITE SWEAT-STAINED COWBOY STYLE SHIRT WITH PEARL BUTTONS. HE HAS AN OLD COWBOY HAT ON AND A PACK OF MARLBORO REDS IN HIS FRONT POCKET. HE LIVES ON THE ROAD, DRIVING AN ENDLESS HIGHWAY. TACO ACTS AS A GUIDE OR SOOTHSAYER FOR LOST TRAVELERS, THE DOWN AND OUT OR DESTITUTE ON THEIR JOURNEY INTO THE NIGHT.



ANNIE JANE



FEMALE (SIXTIES, WHITE OR BLACK). THE LEADER, THE MATRIARCH. THE TRUE LUMINARY OF THE GROUP, AND YET THE MOST CRYPTIC. SHE SPEAKS QUIETLY - LIKE IN AMSR STYLE. WHEN WE ARE WITH HER THE WORLD DROPS AWAY. WE BECOME FOCUSED JUST ON THE SOUNDS OF HER VOICE, BREATH, AND CLOTHING. SHE HAS MADE IT HER MISSION TO REINVENT THE NEW EARTH IN THE IMAGE OF A FEMALE DEITY.

PREACHER



MALE (FIFTIES, WHITE). A GAUNT AND WASTED MAN, HE LOOKS LIKE HE HAS BEEN SLEEPING IN HIS CLOTHES FOR WEEKS. SORES AND SCRATCHES MOTTLE HIS SKIN. HE HAS A DARK SIDE, A VEIN OF PURE BLACK THAT COMES OUT IN MOMENTS OF DELIRIUM. THE PREACHER HOPES TO LEAVE EARTH IN ORDER TO ESCAPE THE DARKNESS INSIDE HIMSELF, FOR HIM THIS TRANSCENSION IS ALL ABOUT REDEMPTION.



BOB THE NOSE



MALE (FORTIES, WHITE, OR BLACK). A LARGE MAN, HE FINDS HIMSELF AT HOME IN THE DUMPSTERS OF THE WORLD. BUT BOB HAS A SUPERHUMAN SENSE OF SMELL AND IT HAS TAKEN HIM EVERYWHERE. HE MAY BE AT THE BOTTOM NOW, BUT HE HAS HOBNOBBED WITH THE RICH AND FAMOUS AND PUT HIS NOSE ANYWHERE IT MIGHT FIT. BOB HOPES TO LEAVE EARTH AND DISCOVER SMELLS THAT HAVE NEVER BEFORE REACHED THE NOSE OF MAN.



PROFESSOR



FEMALE (SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THIRTY AND FIFTY) WHITE. A SLIGHT WOMAN WITH SKINNY ARMS, GREASY BROWN HAIR, AND THICK GLASSES. SHE IS CREEPY. SWEAT SHINES ON HER FACE. SHE WEARS A HIDEOUS BROWN BLAZER AND MATCHING PANTS. DRESS SOCKS AND WRECKED DRESS SHOES ADORN HER FEET. SHE HAS CONFIDENCE AND SWAGGER DESPITE BEING UNKEMPT. HER DELIVERY IS EVEN, SHE IS MORE LIKELY TO RAISE AN EYEBROW THAN HER VOICE.



JIM



MALE (LATE THIRTIES, WHITE OR BLACK). A SQUIRRELLY-LOOKING GUY. HE HAS A MILITARY BUZZ CUT WITH ONE OF HIS EYEBROWS PARTIALLY SHAVED OFF. HE WEARS A TORN-UP XL GRUMPY DWARF SHIRT, A MAGA HAT, AND CAMOUFLAGE PANTS. HAS A CHAOTIC, FRENETIC, AGRESSIVE ENERGY. A CLOSE TALKER AND THE KIND OF MAN YOU WANT TO MOVE AWAY FROM BECAUSE HE IS OBVIOUSLY UNHINGED. HIS MISSION IS TO INFILTRATE THE GROUP AND HALT THEIR ASCENSION.



GALATIC EMISSARY



FEMALE (BETWEEN TWENTY AND THIRTY, ANY ETHNICITY). THE GALACTIC EMISSARY'S SKIN IS IMMACULATE. SHE HAS SILVER REFLECTIVE CLOTHING THAT LOOKS LIKE WOVEN METAL ARMOR. TRANSLUCENT HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS SEEM TO SWIRL AROUND HER. THE ONE AROUND HER HEAD LOOKS LIKE A HALO. SHE'S WHAT THEY'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR.





EARL



TYRONE



GAMMY



BERTHA



EGGS



SWEETS

TEAM

Jimmy Joe Roche is a Filmmaker and Sound Artist residing in Baltimore, MD. He runs the record label Ultraviolet Light and co-curates New Works, a screening series dedicated to showcasing film and video artists based in Baltimore. He is a Senior Lecturer in the Film and Media Studies Department at Johns Hopkins University, and holds a BFA from S.U.N.Y. Purchase in Film and an MFA from MICA in Studio Art. Roche has two human children, Marlowe and Otto.

His work has been screened many places including the Royal Academy of Arts in London, Boston Institute of Contemporary Art, J. Paul Getty Museum, the Museum of the Moving Image, and the Chicago Underground Film Festival. Roche has had five solo exhibitions in New York, Texas, and Colorado. His artwork is in the permanent collection at the Baltimore Museum of Art. Roche has created commissioned work for Dazed and Confused Magazine, Incubate Arts Festival and Harvestworks.

JJR

Matt Porterfield has written and directed four feature films — Hamilton (2006), Putty Hill (2011), I Used To Be Darker (2013) and Sollers Point (2018) — all set in his native city of Baltimore. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Harvard Film Archive and has screened at the Whitney Biennial, the Walker Arts Center, Centre Pompidou, Cinematheque Française, and film festivals such as Sundance, the Berlinale, San Sebastien, Rotterdam and BAFICI. In summer 2014, he wrote and directed his first narrative short, Take What You Can Carry, with a grant from the Harvard Film Study Center. It premiered in the Shorts Competition at the Berlinale in 2015 and screened at Lincoln Center's second annual Art of the Real series. The following year, he co-produced and co-wrote Gaston Solnicki's first fiction feature, Kékszakállú, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His most recent short, Cuatro paredes, was made in Tijuana, Mexico and released by MUBI in 2021. In 2023, he completed his second Spanish-language short, Extinción de la especie, commissioned by the Black Canvas Contemporary Film Festival.

As a producer, Matt has participated in IFP's No Borders, Cinemart, FIDLab, the Berlin Coproduction Market and the Venice Production Bridge. Matt is a Creative Capital grantee, the recipient of a Wexner Center Artists Residency, and a Guggenheim Fellow. Currently, he is based in Mexico City.



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