

SARAH FISHER LUKE BILYK  
CHANTAL KREVIAZUK

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

# KISS & CRY

A  
1 IN 3.5 BILLION  
KIND OF LOVE



MYTHIC PRODUCTIONS with the participation of TELEFILM CANADA and the ONTARIO MEDIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION present  
SARAH FISHER LUKE BILYK CHANTAL KREVIAZUK "KISS AND CRY" SERGIO DIZIO DENIS ARIYAMA  
JULIA TOMASONE BRITTANY BRISTOW ZOE BELKIN LAUREN LESDALE and NAOMI SNIJEKIS  
CASTING JASON KNIGHT and JOHN RICHMAN PRODUCTION DESIGNER DANIELLE SAHOTA WRITERS/EDITORS KAT CRISP MUSIC SUPERVISORS DIONDREA FRAJN MICHAEL PERL MITTER  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY SCOTT MCCLELLAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CASEY MANIENKA-DUNNLEIGH EDITOR MICHELLE SZEMBERG COSTUME DESIGNER KENTHRA TERPENNING  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SARAH FISHER JESSICA MARTINS EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JEFF BEVERETT PRODUCERS JAY BEVERETT JAY FLEISCHGREEN SEAN CISTERNA JEFF BEVERETT  
WRITTEN BY WILLEM WENNEKERS DIRECTED BY SEAN CISTERNA

TELEFILM CANADA Ontario super CHANNEL Ontario Canada MYTHIC

# KISS & CRY

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## Short Synopsis

A romantic drama based on the story of Carley Allison, a promising 18 year old figure skater and singer who finds love just as she is diagnosed with a rare 1 in 3.5 billion form of sarcoma.

## Medium-length Synopsis

At 17, Carley Allison aces her skating competition, moving from Junior to Elite status. The 2014 Sochi Olympics are now a real possibility! The girl whose motto is “always smile” really has something to smile about.

Out celebrating with her friends, Carley meets John Servinis. Their banter is playful and sharp. They make their first pinky promise to each other. And, as someone breaks out an old karaoke machine, John hears Carley sing. The beautiful girl has a beautiful voice. John now has one goal: to impress Carley. And, on their first date, he does. Until Carley collapses!

At the hospital, Dr. Klein tells Carley and her family that she has a malignant melanoma in her trachea. In all of medical history, there have been only seven known cases. The large tumor is too close to her thyroid to remove immediately. First, she will need chemotherapy to shrink its size and a tracheotomy to breathe. Carley is sure she can beat the cancer but is concerned about the impact of the procedure on her singing voice.

With a huge toy panda under his arm, John visits Carley in the hospital. He has a critical question for the patient: will you be my girlfriend?

Back at home, Carley, her parents and her sisters learn the delicate and sometimes messy art of caring for a trache patient. They are all impacted, in some way, by the harsh side effects of chemotherapy. And, always there is John – tender, supportive, funny. But Carley wants more from him. She refuses him permission to ever feel sorry for her. She insists he pinky promises that, no matter what, he will always smile.

John and Carley go skating together, cook dinners together, and fall deeply in love. Ready to test her voice, Carley records her own song, *I Loved You* and posts it to YouTube. It’s good, really good. The post goes viral and is picked up by local media. People all over the world tweet Carley messages of love and support.

On Prom Night, despite the trials of the past months, Carley greets John looking gorgeous. On the dance floor among the twinkling lights, they are a happy, beautiful couple.

Carley’s tumor is removed. She determines that, because she loves him, she must break-up with John. Their worlds are too different now. She doesn’t believe

she can make him happy. He calls. He texts. But, she remains adamant.

At the hospital, a new diagnosis is offered. Carley has Clear cell Sarcoma, the second known case on earth. But, the surgery seems to have been successful. If she passes four healthy CT scans, her cancer will be in remission.

At one of her regular CT scans, Carley meets a hospital donor who is also a senior official with the National Hockey League. He is there to invite Carley to sing the National Anthem at an upcoming game. In front of thousands of people and a televised audience, Carley hits it out of the park but she misses John.

Clearly, he misses her, too, and has plotted with Carley's parents to make his case for their relationship. One evening, the doorbell rings. There stands John – with his entire Greek family bearing a traditional Greek dinner. It's a lovely evening and, in front of both families, the couple is reunited.

The cancer spreads to Carley's lungs. Bathed in the love of her family and John, Carley records and blogs her thoughts and feelings about love and death, kissing and crying.

Carley Elle Allison died in Toronto on March 31, 2015. She was nineteen years old.

## **Long Synopsis**

At 17, Carley Allison aces her skating competition, moving from Junior to Elite status. The 2014 Sochi Olympics are now a real possibility! The girl whose motto is "always smile" really has something to smile about.

Celebrating at a house party with her friends, Carley meets John Servinis. Although they share a biology class, Carley claims she hasn't noticed the handsome young man at school. Their banter is playful and sharp. They make their first pinky promise to each other. And, as someone breaks out an old karaoke machine, John hears Carley sing. The beautiful girl has a beautiful voice.

During a practice skate, Carley faints. The diagnosis - exercise-induced asthma. A puffer controls the wheezing but only a little. Her doctor's response is to test her blood; her coach's response is to push her harder. John just wants to impress her. And, on their first date, he does. Until Carley collapses!

At the hospital, Dr. Klein tells Carley and her family that she has a malignant melanoma in her trachea. In all of medical history, there have been only seven known cases. This young woman is one in a billion. The large tumor is too close to her thyroid to remove immediately. First, she will need chemotherapy to shrink its size and a tracheotomy to breathe. Carley is sure she can beat the cancer but

is concerned about the impact of the procedure on her singing voice.

With a huge toy panda under his arm, John visits Carley in the hospital. She's shy about him seeing the trache tube. So, John offers a deal: you show me the tube in your throat and I'll show you the scar on my butt I got in grade six. Oh, and will you be my girlfriend?

Back at home, Carley, her parents and her sisters learn the delicate and sometimes messy art of caring for a trache patient. They are all impacted, in some way, by the harsh side effects of chemotherapy. And, always there is John – tender, supportive, funny. But Carley wants more from him. She refuses him permission to ever feel sorry for her. She insists he pinky promises that, no matter what, he will always smile.

John and Carley go skating together, cook dinners together, fall deeply in love. Ready to test her voice, Carley records her own song, *I Loved You* and posts it to YouTube. It's good, really good. The post goes viral and is picked up by local media. People all over the world tweet Carley messages of love and support.

Sophie, a no-nonsense, take no-prisoners chemotherapy nurse delivers harsh news to the “always smile” girl. White lies and singing will not cure cancer. Recovery is a matter of ‘if’ not ‘when’.

Covering her chemo-induced baldness with a wig, Carley returns to school and is welcomed with “Cuts for Carley”, the student body's way of telling the young woman that they are behind her, raising money for cancer research. And, Carley starts her blog, ‘Always Smile’ which supports Toronto's Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation.

It's Prom Night. Despite the trials of the past months, when Carley greets John, she looks gorgeous. He hands her a blue box that holds a silver necklace with a silver ‘C’ pendant. On the dance floor among the twinkling lights, they are a happy, beautiful couple.

Carley's tumor is removed. She determines that, because she loves him, she must break-up with John. Their worlds are too different now. She doesn't believe she can make him happy. He calls. He texts. But, she remains adamant.

At the hospital, a new diagnosis is offered. Carley has Clear Cell Sarcoma, the second known case on earth. But, the surgery seems to have been successful. If she passes four healthy CT scans, her cancer will be in remission.

Released from months of tension and fear, Carley breaks down sobbing in a hospital washroom and, in walks a fragile-looking Nurse Sophie. Carley's back goes up. Past exchanges with Sophie have not been good. Defenses down, Sophie explains how twisted emotions of fear and guilt can wear on cancer patients. She knows first-hand; her father has just died from the disease. Mascara running, the women share a moment of intimacy, honesty.

At one of her regular CT scans, Dr. Klein introduces Carley to a hospital donor who's also a senior official with the National Hockey League. He is there to invite Carley to sing the National Anthem at an upcoming game. In front of thousands of people and a televised audience, Carley hits it out of the park but she misses John.

Clearly, he misses her, too, and has plotted with Carley's parents to make his case for their relationship. One evening, the doorbell rings. There stands John – with his entire Greek family bearing a traditional Greek dinner. It's a lovely evening and, in front of both families, the couple is reunited.

The cancer spreads to Carley's lungs. Bathed in the love of her family and John, Carley records and blogs her thoughts and feelings about love and death, kissing and crying.

Carley Elle Allison died in Toronto on March 31, 2015. She was nineteen years old.

She remains an inspiration. The Allison family has established Carley's Angels, a foundation dedicated to helping sick children and their families manage complicated and costly healthcare issues.



## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

I'm unashamed to say that I'm a romantic. And a sucker for romance films. As a husband and a father of 3 young girls, I'm drawn to projects with strong female characters. My films *Full Out* (2015), *30 Ghosts* (2013) and *Moon Point* (2011) feature strong women who are on their own independent, transformative journeys. When I first heard about Carley Allison, an aspiring young figure skater who fought hard to rise in the figure skating ranks, but also battled inoperable cancer, I knew she was a great subject for a film. Carley became a spokeswoman for those struggling with the disease when she made medical headlines for being the one-in-a-billion fighter against a rare form of cancer.

Our feature film based on Carley's life is called *Kiss and Cry*. It's an appropriate title, especially with its romantic and tragic implications. But, it also has a dual meaning: a kiss and cry is a booth that figure skaters go to in order to receive their score after a performance.

Having made films for younger audiences, I'm excited to have directed something more mature. While our protagonist is still a young woman, her struggles are arduous and insurmountable. This is not a family movie where everything is going to be okay. We drew inspiration from such romances as *Love Story*, *A Walk to Remember* and *The Fault in Our Stars* (even though Carley once joked to her boyfriend John that "our story is better").

*Kiss and Cry* takes a traditional narrative approach, with a romantic feel. Grandiose Steadicam shots on ice following Carley as she skates, and elegant, graceful camera moves pushing into our characters aim to heighten the romance within a scene. However, Carley sometimes abruptly breaks the fourth wall and directly speaks to the audience. Key thoughts, feelings and moments from the real Carley Allison's moving 200-page blog she left us were incorporated throughout the script. I believe this device allows us to connect with Carley in a more meaningful and direct way.

I am thrilled that several of today's top musicians have graciously allowed us to license their music, from Canadians *City and Colour* and *Lights* to international recording artist *Christina Perri* (who was personally touched when Carley Allison covered her hit '*Human*' while she was battling cancer).

After having screened the film at various festivals, *Kiss and Cry* is having a tremendous emotional impact on people, and it appears to leave its audience appreciative and reflective upon their lives. Sharing Carley Allison's legacy has been the highlight of my filmmaking career. Carley is a woman I want my young daughters to look up to, and I've been fortunate enough to be trusted by the Allison family to bring her inspirational story to the screen.

Sean Cisterna



## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

SARAH FISHER met Carley Allison when the two were in high school. “Carley was in grade 10; I was in grade 12. At first, it seemed like such a huge gap,” the actress explains. “Then, I heard her sing. She was phenomenal! As I got to know her, I realized we shared a passion for music and for skating. Car and I also have the same sick sense of humour. We just soaked each other up – over frozen yogurt, over coffee, hanging out at her house – I loved being around her.”

SEAN CISTERNA directed Sarah in *Full Out*, the story of gymnast Ariana Berlin’s stunning comeback. “I trusted Sean completely so I said to him ‘I have the best story you’ll ever hear’. We went to the Allison Family who loved the idea. Carley was a star and *KISS and CRY* is the perfect way to celebrate her,” Sarah continues. “I pitched the story to Sean and, 10 months later, here we are filming. Carley is everywhere making this happen. It’s like she’s shining her light on us.

“This is the first time I’ve been in front of *and* behind the camera. Being an associate producer, I see just how much it takes to get from an idea to a script to the floor. I love that Sean and I have become so close; we are set ‘husband and wife’. And, he’s so funny. The other day he texted me: ‘Just taking out the garbage. Do you need me for anything?’

“As I learned about Carley, it was evident that this teenage girl was anything but ordinary,” director/producer SEAN CISTERNA recalls. “She was an artist and an athlete. When she became ill, she created a 200-page blog chronicling her journey with cancer. Her parents, Mark and May, and sisters, Riley and

Samantha, were very open with us. They are a wonderful family. Working with writer Willem Wenckers, we constructed a narrative that is a portrait of this warm and generous young woman, her joy, her humour, her battles and her love for others, particularly her boyfriend John.

“It was important that we capture Carley’s lightness. Even when she was fighting the killer inside her, Carley insisted that those around her practiced her motto – always smile,” Sean continues.

“In many aspects, I think this is a groundbreaking way to make movie. We shot in the locations which were meaningful to Carley – her school, her skating rinks, the Princess Margaret Centre, at a Leafs game at the Air Canada Centre and, most importantly, her home.”

“Opening our home to 40 – 50 people for six days was an emotional roller coaster ride for us,” explains Carley’s mother MAY ALLISON. “But we knew that Carley would have loved us to share her story. She saw everything as an opportunity to make something special happen. And, we hope that *KISS and CRY* will give people, no matter their challenges, the courage to live boldly.”

“After she passed, we had thought of sending thank you cards to Carley’s friends and the people who supported her and us during her long journey. But, this is so much better. Now we can say ‘Hi, do you want to be an extra in a movie about Carley? It’s something that will last forever’,” notes her older sister RILEY ALLISON. “So, on screen you will see her real friends at the school, the prom, the party.”

“We are very proud that a portion of the *KISS and CRY*’s proceeds will go to Carley’s Angels, a foundation, established by the Allison family, dedicated to helping sick children and their families manage complicated and costly healthcare issues,” SEAN CISTERNA commented.



## **LOCATIONS - FULL OF HEART**

Carley Allison's charm and her courage touched many people, places and organizations, among them The Air Canada Centre and the NHL, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Bayview Glenn High School, Scarborough Figure Skating Club and the Toronto Cricket Skating & Curling Club. They all rallied to support the telling of Carley's story.

Watching *Hockey Night in Canada* with her dad was a Saturday night tradition for Carley. And, for a singer and skater, what could be more exciting than actually participating in a game?

In November 2014 to mark Hockey Fights Cancer, Carley sang 'O Canada' before the puck was dropped at a Toronto Maple Leafs/Chicago Blackhawks game at the Air Canada Centre. On March 15, 2016, day 8 of the shoot, cast and crew recreated that electrifying moment. Sarah Fisher stepped out on the ice prior to a Toronto Maple Leafs/Tampa Bay Lightning game and, before a crowd of 20,000 and the *Kiss and Cry* camera, sang the national anthem. The Leafs won the game 4 – 1.

"Carley is not like most people," says actress SARAH FISHER. "She was pumped to sing our anthem at the ACC. And, even though her trache operation had lowered her register, she nailed it. I was in the stands just awash in tears when she did it. I was so proud of her. My experience of singing the anthem was very different. Of course, it was an incredible honour but I was so nervous. I was afraid I'd forget the words!

"After we arrived at the Centre, I had two hours to kill. Many singers and actresses isolate themselves before a big scene. And, you can start second guessing yourself just like you do before a big exam. 'Do I know the facts?' becomes 'do I know the lyrics?' But when I got on the ice, it was incredible. I was wearing Car's outfit so that I could recreate the moment as closely as possible. And, as I came to the end of the anthem and the crowd started to cheer, I was just overwhelmed. I felt so close to Carley."

The Toronto Cricket, Curling and Skating Club was one of Carley's favourite places. She spent hours there perfecting her skill and grace. In commenting on allowing the crew to shoot at the facilities, Olympian BRIAN ORSER, one of the club's skating consultants said, "Carley was a vital part of our skating family at the Toronto Cricket Club. We have all been touched, inspired, and lifted by her courage, and want to honour her memory and the spirit in which she lived."

"Carley Allison was part of our community," says PAUL ALOFS, President and CEO of the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation. "She was a patient, a fundraiser and volunteer for the Hospital for Sick Children and a wonderfully warm, funny young woman. It is very rare for a hospital to open its facilities to a film crew. By allowing *KISS and CRY* access to the building, we are participating in a

film which reflects her spirit and generosity, a film which we hope expands understanding of and support for cancer patients and their families.”

The most important and powerful of sets is the Allison family home in North Toronto. The family room, the kitchen, the living room, even Carley’s bedroom – the cast and crew had access to the spaces Carley, her family and friends had loved and lived in. “Opening our home to a group of 60 people was very emotional,” notes MAY ALLISON. “It was an emotional rollercoaster but we agreed because we think Carley would have loved to have a movie made of her story.

“We want people to know how special Carley was. She was a bright light. She was an inspiration and we hope that people will feel touched and inspired by her journey. She never felt sorry for herself. For her, everything was an opportunity to make something special happen.

“Seeing Sarah play Carley is sometimes spooky. We know her so well. She and Carley were so close. It has created highs and lows for us. When I heard Sarah singing in the music room as Carley used to do, it made me oddly calm.”

“Having the filming in our home is a double-edged sword,” says Carley’s father MARK ALLISON. “There are times when I smile and laugh to see moments between Carley and her sisters or Carley and John recreated. And, there are times when I can’t watch the monitor, when I can’t even be in the room. It was fun see the high school prom and Carley and John’s friends playing extras. But I couldn’t go to the hospital. We still have a reality to live. We don’t have our daughter.”

“It can be a little difficult to make a cup of coffee when you have 50 people in your kitchen,” admits Carley’s sister RILEY ALLISON. “But, it’s also quite wonderful. Sean (director Cisterna) posted that he was so inspired by someone he’ll never meet. People tell us that no crew is like this crew – as happy and involved. It’s the Carley factor.

“Fishy, that’s what we call Sarah Fisher, has told everyone a lot about Carley and I think by being in our house, the cast and crew feels close to her. I hope that the film will inspire other people to never give up.”



### **THE ACTORS ON THE EXPERIENCE OF KISS AND CRY**

As well as being associate producer, SARAH FISHER plays Carley Allison. “John Servinis is an angel. A cool, quirky, popular brilliant guy. It’s impossible to explain how perfect he and Car were together. They had one of the most beautiful relationships you’ll ever see. They were best friends before dating. John is a hopeless romantic. After her first week of chemo, he asked Carley to be his girlfriend. He would have it no other way. My acting partner Luke (Bilyk) has a lot of John’s qualities. When the two met, it was as if they were brothers. I think they were both shocked by the similarities between them. John has a cameo in the film.

“*Kiss and Cry* gathered together so many people who knew Car. And there are times when filming is tough but most of time it’s pure magic I think because she’s here with us. I remember the day she got the diagnosis of double lung cancer, she texted me: let’s go skating. She had the biggest heart.

“Yes, it was strange to film in her bedroom where we had spent so much time hanging out, talking about our lives, just being together but it was also wonderful to feel so very close to her. And there’s a very touching scene where Carley’s mother holds her and sings to her. Can you imagine how thrilling it is to have Chantal Kreviazuk sing softly in your ear?

“My dream would be travel around the world with this film to tell her story. And, I

want the film to do well so that we can give back to Carley's Angels, the foundation the Allison's established to help other families facing cancer.

LUKE BILYK plays Carley's true love John Servinis. "This is the most beautifully creative project I've ever been involved with," the actor says. "John is a very selfless, giving guy whose energy comes directly from his heart. He was on set almost every day, which was a little intimidating but he was always supportive of the work we were doing.

"Cancer makes everyone feel awkward. Me too. But the honest and open way Carley and John dealt with it in their relationship was so inspiring. I could feel Carley's energy on set. Her presence is in every moment Sarah and I shot together. Carley and John had a relationship that was much deeper and more mature than most people their age. They just fit together. They were playful together but they could be very serious. Even though she had a million things in her path, Carley always looked forward to the brighter horizon ahead

"Sarah Fisher and I go back a long way. She played my last girlfriend on *Degrassi*. We trust each other as friends and as actors. We have the same kind of lightness about us that Carley and John had. Sarah has many moments in the film where she's on the brink and, as her acting partner, I loved helping her get there. Audiences are going to fall in love with Carley and John.

"Carley is an inspiration not just to cancer patients but to all people. She lived her life to fullest. To the very end she was joyful. She's affected me and everyone who comes on set. Everything we created in this *Kiss and Cry* world is touched by Carley. It gives me shivers. She flows through every moment of the film.

Celebrated singer-songwriter CHANTAL KREVIAZUK plays May Allison, Carley's mom. "Carley was an artist who was an activist. I think that's why I feel so close to her. She was an outlier – gifted, fearless. It's an exceptional privilege to be invited to participate in this film. It is our responsibility to tell her story, to continue her beautiful legacy.

"There is much to learn from this young woman about never getting stuck in what's wrong, about remaining engulfed in what's right. Working on *Kiss and Cry* and learning Carley's story so intimately has been an amazing tool for me to get better at this thing called life. It's an honour and privilege to share her story.

"This is not a film about cancer," the singer continues. "This is a film about attitude and love. And, it is a film made with great love. Shooting in her family home with Carley's parents and sisters in the kitchen was a really special experience. It feels like a beautiful shiva. Carley is everywhere with us on this set. And Carley was very lucky. Not only did she have the adoration of her family, she found true love at a very young age with John Servinis.

“May Allison, Carley’s mom, is herself an extraordinary woman. She’s a long distance runner and represented Canada at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. So you can imagine how tough and determined she is. And, the apple didn’t fall far from the tree. Her mom hardwired Carley to be focused and positive. Even when she was very sick, Carley would not tolerate anyone coming near her if they weren’t coming with joy and strength.

“If Carley lived every day with openness and love and fun, so can we. So must we.”



## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

### **SARAH FISHER** Carley Allison and Associate Producer

Sarah Fisher, is a Canadian actress, model, singer and songwriter. Sarah is best known for her role as Becky Baker on *Degrassi : The Next Generation* for three seasons.

Sarah performed extensively throughout her childhood and teenage years in choirs, musical theatre, festivals, and competitions. Today she sings a wide variety of musical genres including jazz, musical theatre, opera and pop. Sarah has trained with both Kim Briggs and Elaine Overholt, a renowned vocal coach for both *Hairspray* and Oscar-Winning *Chicago*. Sarah has evolved from a student to a teacher for Elaine's Glee Class. Sarah's desire to broaden her talent on-stage led her from singing to acting. Sarah's first audition was for the critically acclaimed *Degrassi*, where she landed her first role.

In June 2015, Sarah starred in the movie *The Stepchild* alongside Lauren Holly (Dumb and Dumber). Sarah's most recent roles include, 'Laurie' in the film *Lost After Dark* and the role of 'Isla' in NBC and Family Channel's movie *Full Out* alongside Jennifer Beals (*Flashdance*). She has also guest starred in the hit CBC show *Heartland* as Samantha. She studies acting at Armstrong Acting Studios in Toronto. Sarah has produced three original songs placed in hit TV series *Degrassi* as well as NBC's movie *Full Out*. Sarah is also a model with Elite Model Management.

Sarah is a huge supporter of Youth. Sarah is the Celebrity Ambassador for Kids Help Phone, a support system for young people experiencing bullying as well as abuse at home. Sarah is also an ambassador for Youth Day Global, a Toronto based initiative that recognizes, supports and celebrates young talent in the arts. Sarah joined the Wear Your Label family in 2015, as one of their Lead Role Models for their clothing line that supports young people struggling with mental health. Sarah modeled for them in New York Fashion Week 2015.

### **LUKE BILYK** John Servinis

With numerous roles on television and a feature career on the horizon, Luke Bilyk is a young actor whose star is on the ascent. Born in North York, Ontario, Canada, Luke's passion for acting began at the early age of five. Following that zeal for creating characters, Luke became best known for his role as "Drew Torres" on the iconic television series *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, where he was a fan favorite for five seasons. Luke followed up his run on *Degrassi*, by flexing his dramatic muscles joining the Emmy Award winning Canadian series *Lost Girl* series for two seasons. In the sci-fi drama, Luke played "Mark," a character whose tough exterior is linked with a haunted past.

In Spring 2016 we will see Luke alongside Jason Priestley and Molly Ringwald in the half-hour single camera TV sitcom comedy *Raising Expectations* created by

Tom Saunders of *Arrested Development* and *News Radio* fame. Luke will play "Adam Wayney," a sibling in the Wayney clan known for their good looks, Mensa level intelligence, creativity, athleticism and popularity. The busy actor will also be seen in 2016 on the big screen in the title role of the fantasy/thriller *Adam's Testament*.

Luke's previous feature work includes the 2015 horror film *Hellions* which screened at both the prestigious Sundance and Toronto International Film Festivals and now showcases on Netflix.

Not content just to make his mark as an actor, Luke also has interests behind the camera, coproducing three short films: *Where Love Takes You*, *Cycle of Broken Grace* and *Little White Lines*.

Beyond the screen, Luke has wisely used his platform as a successful actor to tirelessly support the world renowned organization Free the Children. Luke has traveled to countries such as India, Haiti and Nicaragua where he aided in building schools and assisting with the construction of water filtration systems in the poorest regions of the countries.

Luke is not only the youngest of four children, but also the only boy. His exotic good looks are the result of an Italian, Ukrainian and German background. In his free time, Luke indulges his love of sports by playing both hockey and soccer. Luke is also a proficient drummer.

## **CHANTAL KREVIAZUK**

May Allison

Chantal Kreviazuk is one of Canada's most beloved artists. Winner of multiple Juno Awards including "Best Female Artist" and "Best Pop/Adult Album", Chantal's Platinum-selling debut, *Under These Rocks and Stones*, was just the beginning of what continues to be a remarkable and prolific music career. With a string of distinguished albums and singles, including a new studio record in the works, Chantal's drive to expand her artistry has led her to become a highly sought-after songwriter, penning hits for Pink, Christina Aguilera, Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood, Kendrick Lamar and Drake, among many others. Her songs have also appeared on numerous film and television soundtracks including "Armageddon", "Dawson's Creek", "How to Lose a Guy in Ten Days" and "The Sisterhood of the Travelling Pants."

Having worked in theatre as a child, performing both on stage and in front of cameras came naturally to Chantal. In 2001, she made her big-screen acting debut as a main character in David Weaver's award-nominated film *Century Hotel*. She also co-wrote the movie's theme song, "Can't Make It Good", with her husband Raine Maida. Chantal next went on to write, co-produce and star in the short film *Pretty Broken* about a woman dealing with mental illness. A passion project about a subject important to her, the film debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival that year. Chantal followed that up with another festival film, acting in the short period thriller *The Spirit Game*, which screened at

the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. She is currently filming the Carley Allison biopic *Kiss & Cry*, slated for a theatrical release in 2017.

Chantal is not only a creative force but also a passionate humanitarian. Having demonstrated an outstanding commitment to human rights causes – being an avid supporter of War Child Canada, Canadian Mental Health Association and many others – Chantal, along with her husband Raine, received both the 2014 Allan Slaight Humanitarian Spirit Award and The Allen Waters Humanitarian Award for their longstanding dedication to the world community. Most recently, the Governor General jointly appointed Chantal and Raine to the Order of Canada, one of the Country's most distinguished honours.

**SERGIO DI ZIO**     Mark Allison

Sergio Di Zio was born and raised in Toronto. Last year he won The Dora Mavor Moore Theatre Award for Best Performance- Independent Theatre Division in the Toronto premier of "The Motherfucker With the Hat" for The Coalmine Theatre. He is currently featured in DirecTV/EOne's crime series *Rogue* where he plays Chicago PD, Patrick Finnegan. Previously he played bomb and tech expert Michelangelo "Spike" Scarlatti on the CBS/CTV police drama *Flashpoint*, a role that garnered him four consecutive years of best supporting actor nominations and for which he received the Gemini Award in 2011.

He has toured Canada with Tarragon Theatre's original productions of "Scorched" and "Léo". Other theatre work includes Hannah Moscovitch's "This Is War" and Christopher Shinn's "Dying City."

His film work includes Robert Zimeckis' *The Walk*, Ron Howard's *Cinderella Man* and Miramax' *The Lookout*. Other television work includes guest stars on *Rookie Blue* and *Suits*. He will next be featured in the *Rupture* starring Noomi Rapace and this winter begins work in John Madden's *Miss Sloane* starring Jessica Chastain.

**NAOMI SNIECKUS**     Sophie

An actor/writer/improviser/voice-over artist/director/ teacher, Naomi is a regular on CBC's hit comedy *Mr. D* now in its fifth season. The role won her a Canadian Comedy Award (CCA), an ACTRA and two Canadian Screen Awards nominations.

She is an alumna of The Second City Comedy Theatre in Toronto where she wrote and performed in five hit revues. TV and film credits include: *12 Trees of Christmas*, *Drunk and On Drugs Happy FunTime Hour (Trailer Park Boys)*, *The Listener*, *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, *Train 48*, *Regenesis*, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, *The Ron James Show*, *Being Erica*, *Wingin' It*, *Alphas*, *Skins*, *Saw 7 3D*, *Dino Dan*, *AnneDroids* and *Playdate*.

You may have heard Naomi's voice on CBC Radio's *Canada* or as Aunt Turtle on the cartoon *Franklin the Turtle*. She's a co-creator of *The Casting Room Web Series* (LA WebFest and CCA award recipient). Naomi has also received a Canadian Comedy Award in the category of Best Female Improviser.

She is a founding member and Co-Artistic Director of the six time Canadian Comedy Award-winning troupe The National Theatre of the World (Impromptu Splendor, The Carnegie Hall Show, Baram & Snieckus, and The Script Tease Project) and was a regular on George Stroumboulopoulos Tonight on CBC and TMI on Showcase.

You can see her in the feature films *Happily Ever After* with Peter Firth, *The Steps* with Christine Lahti and Jason Ritter, *Love of My Life* and the award-winning festival hit *Two for One* with Gavin Crawford.

Naomi and her partner Matt Baram hosted the Dora Awards for two years in a row and host various corporate events around North America. The two are executive producers and stars of the webseries "Doing it With Brian and Darla" on CBC's Punchline.

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

### **SEAN CISTERNA**                      Director/Producer

Sean Cisterna is a feature film and television director who has worked in the film and television industry in Canada for over 15 years. His projects are frequently distributed in Canada, the United States and around the world.

Cisterna's first produced feature, *My Brother's Keeper* (starring X-Men's Shawn Ashmore and Smallville's Aaron Ashmore) was picked up by Anchor Bay Entertainment; 2008's *King of the Camp* has been airing continually on YTV in Canada and Starz in the US; 2011's *Moon Point* was sold to The Movie Network and was released nationally on DVD/digital in the fall of 2012. His feature length documentary *30 Ghosts* was developed out of the Hot Docs International Documentary Film Festival's Doc Ignite program, and now resides with the National Film Board of Canada.

2015's *Full Out*, a family film about California gymnast Ariana Berlin, soared to the top of the ratings across all non-sports networks when it debuted on Family Channel in Canada. The film stars Jennifer Beals (*Flashdance*) and Ana Golja (*Degrassi*). *Full Out* is currently airing across Disney Europe and was broadcast on over 195 television stations across the United States leading into the 2016 Summer Olympics, and has recently gone global on Netflix Worldwide.

2017's *Kiss and Cry* is based on the true story of Carley Allison, and up-and-coming figure skater and singer who finds love just as she is diagnosed with an incredibly rare cancer. The film will be released theatrically in early 2017 by Elevation Pictures and stars Luke Bilyk, Chantal Kreviazuk and Sarah Fisher, who was Carley Allison's best friend in real life.

**Willem Wennekers**            Writer

Willem is the co-creator, executive producer, and showrunner of the adult-skewed animated hit *Fugget About It*, now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> season. *Fugget About It* was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award as Best Animated Program in 2014 and is currently running on Cartoon Network Canada's [Adult Swim] block and as a Hulu Original in the United States.

After graduating from Calgary's Mount Royal College with a diploma in Theatre Arts Performance and a BFA in Film Production from the University of Regina, Willem Wennekers spent a summer at MuchMusic as a winner of their annual "Temp" contest. Shortly thereafter Willem moved to Toronto and quickly sold his first screenplay *The Night Class (aka Seduced by a Thief)* which was produced in Los Angeles, starring Sean Young and Ron Perlman.

His second feature script, *Weirdsville*, was directed by Allan Moyle and starred Scott Speedman, Wes Bentley, and Tayrn Manning. The film opened the Slamdance Festival in Park City Utah and the Raindance Film Festival in London, UK as well as playing the Toronto International Film Festival, the Edinburgh International Film Festival, and many other film festivals across North America.

Willem has also written the feature films *Step Dogs*, *Pups United*, *Full Out*, and now *Kiss and Cry*. He has contributed to National Lampoon online and his satiric piece 'Trophy Wife Magazine' was included in the book *National Lampoon's Magazine Rack*.

**JEFF DEVERETT**            Executive Producer

President & CEO of the San Diego-based companies Deverett Media Group and Carmel Creek Productions LLC, Jeff Deverett was the executive producer of the family movies-for-television *Full Out* (2015) and *King of the Camp* (2008) both directed by Sean Cisterna.

He also executive produced the feature *My Brother's Keeper* and 39 half-hour episodes of the children's television series *Ricky's Room*.

A graduate of the Osgoode Hall Law School (University of Toronto), Deverett has held senior positions with major Canadian entertainment companies. Among them are: HIT ENTERTAINMENT (Senior Vice President, Home Entertainment); ANCHOR BAY ENTERTAINMENT (Executive Vice President) Canada &

International; SPAR Corp (President, Canada & International) ASTRAL COMMUNICATIONS (Vice President, Distribution & Licensing); KABOOM! ENTERTAINMENT INC. – Canada; Founder, President & CEO of the DVD and television distribution company KABOOM! ENTERTAINMENT INC. – Canada.

**AVI FEDERGREEN**          Producer

With over 20 years of experience, Avi Federgreen has produced and executive produced award winning music videos to television series and full-length feature films. Starting in the locations department, he moved quickly into production management, line producing, post supervision, and producing.

Projects produced by Federgreen that are currently in release include

*Prisoner X* produced with Robyn Bigué, written and directed by Gaurav Seth.

He acted as Executive Producer on projects including

*How To Plan An Orgy In a Small Town* produced By Jonathan Walker and Chris Bennett, written and directed by Jeremy Lalonde;

Award- winning *Empire of Dirt* produced by Jennifer Podemski and directed by Peter Stebbings, premiered at Toronto International Film Festival, 2013;

*The Cocksure Lads* produced by Murray Foster and Darren Portelli, written and directed by Murray Foster;

*Relative Happiness* produced by Lynne Wilson, Jill Knox Gosse and Alan Collins, written and directed by Deanne Foley;

*Porch Stories* produced by Sara Galea Davis and Sarah Goodman and written and directed by Sarah Goodman;

the first ever Canadian fully financed 3D feature titled *Dead Before Dawn* produced by April Mullen and Tim Dorion of Wango Films and directed by April Mullen;

the Vancouver-based feature film *Random Acts of Romance* produced by Darren Reiter and Katrin Bowen, directed by Katrin Bowen;

and *Moon Point* produced by Sean Cisterna and Christian Potenza, directed by Sean Cisterna.

Federgreen also produced:

*Still Mine* directed by Michael McGowan, starring Academy Award Nominees James Cromwell and Genevieve Bujold, premiered at Toronto International Film Festival, 2012,

*Score: A Hockey Musical* written and directed by Michael McGowan. The film, which captures the fervor of Canada's two favourite pastimes in a story big on humour and heart, opened the Toronto International Film Festival, 2010;

*George Ryga's Hungry Hills*, directed by Rob King, premiered at Toronto International Film Festival, 2009.

For television, Federgreen produced:  
the Shaftesbury TV series *Good Dog*, written and directed by Ken Finkelman;  
and the documentary *As Slow as Possible*, directed by Scott Smith, an official selection of HotDocs 2008.

Federgreen's co-production credits are impressive and varied. They include

*I'm Yours* produced with Jennifer Jonas and Mallery Davenport of New Real Films, directed by Leonard Farlinger,

*One Week*, written and directed by Michael McGowan (Best Canadian Film, 2008 Calgary and Edmonton film festivals, Gala Screening at Toronto International Film Festival). The film surpassed the \$1.2 million Canadian box office mark, was the #1 rental on iTunes, and finished in the top 10 in DVD sales in Canada during its first week of release.

*High Life*, produced by Triptych Media and directed by Gary Yates, premiered at the Berlin Film Festival and was featured at TIFF 2009;

*Leslie, My Name Is Evil*, directed by Reginald Harkema, produced by New Real Films also screened at TIFF 2009;

the nationally acclaimed TV mini-series *It's Me...Gerald*, (Showcase).

In November 2011, Federgreen opened his own film distribution company INDIECAN ENTERTAINMENT. The company services not just up-and-coming Canadian filmmakers, but also those independent filmmakers of lower budget projects which would otherwise have virtually no chance to shine in a market of big studios, distributors and exhibitors.