

ESPOCINEMA PRESENTS

A FILM BY **ADRIAN ESPOSITO** AND **CURT MARKHAM**

CLOWNS IN THE WOODS





REVENGE
IS A DISH
BEST SERVED
SWEET!

CLOWNS IN THE WOODS

ESPOCINEMA PRESENTS A FILM BY ADRIAN ESPOSITO AND CURT MARKHAM "CLOWNS IN THE WOODS"
STARRING DALTON LETTA ROSELYN KASWIRE BIZ LACHANCE ADRIAN ESPOSITO ARLOWE PRICE GREG LENTZ LUTHER LEBRON LAYNE JOHN KARYUS
MUSIC BY HUMBERTO COLON EDITED BY ADRIAN ESPOSITO DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN HAWKINS ASSOCIATE PRODUCER JOANNE STORKAN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS KRISTINA NOMEIKA AND ADRIAN ESPOSITO WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ADRIAN ESPOSITO AND CURT MARKHAM

CLOWNS IN THE WOODS

Running Time:

90 minutes

Directed By:

**Adrian Esposito
and Curt Markham**

Written By:

**Adrian Esposito
and Curt Markham**

Produced By:

Kristina Nomeika

Production Company:

Espocinema, LLC

Edited by:

Adrian Esposito

Cinematographer:

Sean Hawkins

Composer:

Humberto Colon

Special Effects:

**R. J. Young
Mike Boas
Tom Gleason
Kyra Gleason**



LOGLINE

Marcus, a young man with a disability, is bullied and killed after a prank goes wrong. In the afterlife, he meets a group of ghostly clowns who help him exact revenge on those who have wronged him.

SYNOPSIS

Marcus is a young man with a disability who is bullied and dies when a vicious prank goes wrong. He then comes back from the grave as a killer clown, to exact revenge on those who have wronged him. He is guided by other killer clowns, who have their own slapstick methods of causing death and destruction.

One of Marcus' few friends in life was his neighbor Amy, a lesbian college student with a big heart. As the deaths pile up, Amy is determined to learn the deadly secret behind the recent wave of murders, not realizing that she may be putting herself and her loved ones in danger.

ABOUT THE FILM

Clowns in the Woods is an independent horror movie with creepy villains, twisted kills, and a spooky small-town atmosphere.

In the tradition of *Candyman* and *Nightmare on Elm Street*, *Clowns in the Woods* is about the sins of the past, as a younger generation must grapple with the consequences of past injustice.

Directors Adrian Esposito and Curt Markham have been fans of horror films since a young age, especially independent regional horror films. They wanted to create a horror movie inspired by the 2016 clown sightings, and to include people with disabilities in both the story and the production.

Since co-director Adrian Esposito is on the Autism spectrum, the filmmakers feel this film is important because it has the potential to break the mold of how people with disabilities are seen. For this reason, *Clowns in the Woods* also cast an actor with a disability in the prominent role of Marcus.



There is a common prejudice against low-budget horror movies. The makers of *Clowns in the Woods* want to show that there is value in horror genre storytelling. Not just by diving into the worlds of make-believe and dark fantasy, but also in showing a unique approach to diversity. The villains who display prejudice get their just desserts, and audiences will hopefully find sympathy with the disadvantaged characters.



CO-DIRECTOR and CO-WRITER Adrian Esposito

Co-director Adrian Esposito's previous credits include producing and writing the narrative film *Bury My Heart With Tonawanda*, a period piece about an outcast boy with Down Syndrome who is taken in by the Seneca Tribe. He has also directed several feature length documentaries such as *Greetings from Tromaville* (spotlighting the work of Lloyd Kaufman and Troma Entertainment) and *Diffability Hollywood* (about the history of people with disabilities in films).

Adrian's work has gained national recognition. He won the prestigious NYSARC Self-Advocate of the Year Award and was honored to be the recipient of the ARC National Executives NCE Lifetime Achievement Award in filmmaking. He is a two-time recipient of the Los Angeles Red Nation Film Festival Courage Award. In 2016, he was named "Filmmaker of the Year" at the Buffalo Dreams Fantastic Film Festival and his film *Diffability Hollywood* won as Best Documentary Feature at the same festival.

Adrian is a spokesperson for self-advocates, helping the world accept people with disabilities as capable and thus seeing their disabilities as "diffabilities." The topic of disability representation is close to Adrian's heart, since he is himself a part of the disability community. Adrian has autism. His life experiences bring a unique perspective to his films that resonate with many people facing similar challenges in life. Adrian feels that his autism works well with his filmmaking. "People with this disorder tend to hyper focus on an area of interest, my interest area has always been movies," says Adrian.

More of his credits can be viewed on IMDB: <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3982944/>

CO-DIRECTOR and CO-WRITER

Curt Markham

Co-director Curt Markham has been making films since he was a teenager. *Saberfrog*, *Curse the Darkness* and *The Search for Silverspear*. He was an in-house videographer and usability engineer at Xerox Corporation and has written industrial films for Eastman Kodak Corp.

At Rochester's PBS station WXXI-TV, he was a segment producer for *Homework Hotline* and *Assignment: The World* and directed episodes of the talk show *Sound Bytes*. He co-starred in the web series *The Whitemeats* and wrote and acted in the award-winning horror comedy short *Enter the Dagon*.

More of his credits can be viewed on IMDB:
<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3783013>





EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Kristina Nomeika

Executive producer Kristina Nomeika is Adrian Esposito's production partner, producing over 12 years of documentary and feature productions for Espocinema. These include the award-winning *Diffability Hollywood*, *Inner Healing*, *We Can Shine*, and many others.

A retired vocational rehabilitation counselor with New York State, she now finds purpose in supporting Adrian's film efforts. One of her objectives in producing these films is to show the world that people with developmental disabilities can write, act, edit, and teach.

Kristina's credits can be seen on IMDB:

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3986981>

HORROR WITH A PURPOSE

For the co-creators of *Clowns in the Woods*, filmmaking is a lifelong passion. Their own independent approach to storytelling is mirrored in the film's of outsider characters and their struggles with an uncaring community. Of course, being a horror movie, the main character of *Clowns* finds a way to come back from death to exact revenge on those who wronged him in life.

From the time he was a teenager, Adrian Esposito has made films about underdogs, the abused, and victims of discrimination. His documentaries are about survivors of WWII, native peoples and their spiritual beliefs, characters with disabilities, even independent filmmakers who buck the system. From a young age, Adrian loved films by independent voices and iconoclasts, including Roger Corman, Tom Laughlin, and Lloyd Kaufman. All of whom Adrian had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing through his film projects.

Curt Markham also embodies the ideals of the independent filmmaker. Curt is a graduate of NYU's film program, with an MFA in imaging arts and computer animation from the Rochester Institute of Technology. He has never been one to wait for permission to make films. Curt is more interested in picking up a camera and getting his stories told. In his independent features *Curse the Darkness* and *Saberfrog*, characters struggle to find purpose and identity, all against a fantastical sci-fi backdrop.

Adrian and Curt have collaborated on many projects, including the documentaries *Diffability Hollywood* and *Greetings From Tromaville*, and the narrative feature *Bury My Heart with Tonawanda*. For *Diffability Hollywood*, the goal was to give an overview of the history of disability portrayals in film and television, as well as representation behind the camera. The title of the film comes from the concept that those with "disabilities" have different abilities, or "diffabilities." We as a society should find ways to include them in all aspects of life, including entertainment. If those with disabilities make up twenty percent of the population, we should strive to include them in the stories we tell.

For *Bury My Heart with Tonawanda*, Adrian wrote a script about a character with Down Syndrome who is shunned by his family but taken in by the more accepting Seneca tribe of Native Americans. Ultimately, that role was played at various ages by multiple actors with Downs.

Adrian and Curt have continued that effort to feature characters and actors with disabilities. When thinking about another narrative feature to collaborate on, Adrian thought a character with autism at the center of a horror film would have possibilities. For *Clowns*, the inspiration would come from the recent clown scares of 2016. In what became a media frenzy, people all over the country reported evil clown sightings. Although these stories were more a case of mass hysteria than an actual evil clown problem, the idea made great fodder for a horror film. If there were actual killer ghost clowns, what would drive them? What would make a clown come back from the grave? Adrian wrote it up as a screenplay, and Curt expanded it, bringing in the Amy character and mystery-solving aspect.

In classic slashers, the killer is often a mentally unstable person. This outcast villain is treated as an "other," someone different who should be feared. With *Clowns*, there was a conscious decision to make the different person more sympathetic. His vengeful actions are brought into question and the audience is invited to ask the question, are anger and revenge the answer?





In casting the character of Marcus, a bullied young man "on the spectrum," the producers were lucky to find Dalton Letta. Dalton, who has autism, has an impressive list of credits in community theater, including a boisterous portrayal of Shrek in *Shrek: The Musical*. His voice and enthusiasm were perfect for underdog Marcus and later his evil clown persona.

Nolan Tierce, an actor with Down Syndrome, plays Dan, Marcus' friend and the heart of the film. Dan is a person Marcus turns to for advice, and is ultimately the conscience to guide the way.

Amy, played by Roselyn Kasmire, has her own challenges in life. Her homosexuality has made her an outcast in the eyes of her mother. Amy struggles to maintain balance in her life, but her acceptance of Marcus is never in question.

With *Clowns in the Woods*, the filmmakers have strived to make an entertaining story that touches on themes of inclusivity, embodied both in front of and behind the camera.



CAST

Dalton Letta as Marcus

Dalton Letta stars in the lead role of Marcus. He is a known spokesperson and “ambassador” for autism in the Rochester, NY area. He is one of the founders of Campaign D, an organization whose mission is to bring awareness of autism and the abilities of those on the autism spectrum. He is the Monroe County “Face of Autism Advocate”. The producers discovered Dalton when he starred as Shrek in the Artists Unlimited production of *Shrek The Musical*. Dalton's other stage roles include: Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*, King Maximillian in *Cinderella*, Robertson Aye the butler in *Mary Poppins*, Chef Louie in *The Little Mermaid*, Augustus Gloop in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*.

Roselyn Kasmire as Amy

Roselyn Kasmire is described as "an inspiration to many and very outgoing." As an actress and writer, Roselyn has wrapped on many featured films, including *Rust Belt Killer* (2021), *Sleeping with The Project* (2021), *Not Another Monster Movie* (2019), *Diary of Lunatic* (2019), *Unchaste* (2019), *Alone Together* (2018), *The First Purge* (2018), and *Marshall* (2017).





Biz LaChance as *James*

Biz LaChance was born Carlos Michael LaChance in the city of Rochester, New York. At the age of 17, Biz decided that working in film was his passion. He was able to make short films in his high school film class. That year and the following year he was selected to write and assistant direct two plays for the 2006 and 2007 SOTA Playwrights Festival. After taking some time off for school, family, and other ventures, he has recently returned to pursuing his dream of acting and directing again full time. He now acts, and works behind the camera on many different productions since 2017. He published a crime novel, *Murder inK*, in 2016.



John Renna as *Mr. Belson*

John Renna's taste for filmmaking came from a childhood watching sci-fi, action and horror. His halloween make-ups and costumes were so good he would scare adults. It was in doing special effects and acting for Halloween haunts that he would learn what really scares people. One his first acting roles was the mayor in *Slime City Massacre*. In the last fifteen years, he has performed in a variety of feature films, including *Johnny Gruesome*, *Return to Nuke 'Em High Volume 1*, and *Widow's Point*.



Adrian Esposito as **Rosco**



Arlowe Price as **Jingles**



Greg Lentz as **Jekko**



Luther LeBron Layne
as **Jester**

THE CLOWNS

John Karyus as **Mr. Punch**



FEATURING



Nolan Tierce
as ***Dan***



PJ Ryan
as ***Peter Bannon***



Hailey Anne
as ***Liz***



Anthony S. Creek
as ***Brad***



Kevin Millane
as ***Jerry***

FEATURING



Rhonda Parker
as ***Aunt Debbie***



Michael Ciesla
as ***Zack***



Amy Zubieta
as ***Alice***



Amila Favata
as ***Kelly***



Paul McGinnis
as ***Police Detective***



Jason John Beebe
as ***Police Officer***

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Format: 4K Digital

Audio: Stereo

Aspect: 2.39:1

Length: 90 minutes

Language: English

LINKS & CONTACT

Trailer: <https://youtu.be/POihqoudIdE>

Follow the film on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/clownsinthewoodsmovie

For more about Espocinema, LLC, visit

www.espocinema.com

For press inquiries, contact espocinema@rochester.rr.com









See You Soon!

