

LISTEN CLOSELY...

M3554G3

A FILM BY SKIP ERICKSON

ASHLEY-RENE' EVEREST

NICHOLAS JOSEPH MACKEY



PRESS KIT  
[www.SetJester.com](http://www.SetJester.com)

SET JESTER PRESENTS  
AN ERICKSON/MACKEY PRODUCTION A SKIP ERICKSON FILM  
ASHLEY-RENE' EVEREST NICHOLAS JOSEPH MACKEY "MESSAGE"  
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY SHERYL COONAN SOUND MIXER CRUCE GRAMMATICO SCRIPT SUPERVISOR JOANNA LAROSE  
PRODUCED BY SKIP ERICKSON NICHOLAS J. MACKEY FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR STEVEN RODRIGUEZ  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY SKIP ERICKSON MUSIC SCORE COMPOSED BY SKIP ERICKSON  
WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY SKIP ERICKSON

## FILM SYNOPSIS

Eric and Samantha Millar find themselves having to come to terms with the loss of their daughter. Since her passing, they have begun to slowly drift apart from each other, both dealing with the loss in their own way... Eric for the better, Samantha for the worst.

Then one day, Samantha receives a message...

One that changes everything.



## THE CAST

### Ashley-Rene' Everest as Samantha 'Sam' Millar

From film, to TV series, to music videos, all eyes are focused upon up-and-coming actress Ashley-Rene' Everest. She has been featured in productions such as "Beyond the Dark", Lee Martin's "The Midnight Hour", and the feature film "Freaky Deaky". And although radiant in beauty, do not be fooled, Ashley has tackled and delivered a multiple award winning performance as Samantha 'Sam' Millar in the new Skip Erickson psychological drama from Set Jester.



## THE CAST

Nicholas Joseph Mackey as Eric Millar

Seasoned actor and film producer Nicholas Joseph Mackey is no stranger to drama. He delivers a powerful performance in the new Skip Erickson psychological drama from Set Jester. Audiences witnessed Nicholas in the role of Eric Millar, a father who is coping with the recent loss of a daughter, as well as having to deal with an emotionally distraught wife. Nicholas provides audiences with a memorable and emotional performance.



## THE CREW

- > Skip Erickson - Executive Producer, Producer, Writer, Director, Cinematographer, Camera Operator, Editor, Music Composer, and Sound Designer.
- > Nicholas Joseph Mackey - Executive Producer
- > Cruce Grammatico - Sound Mixer, Boom Operator
- > Steven Rodriguez - 1st Assistant Director
- > Sheryl Coonan - Hair and Makeup Supervisor
- > Joanna LaRose - Script Supervisor and Continuity



# TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Run time: 27:14

Completion date: February 2014

Country of production: USA

Location of production: Michigan

Production budget: <\$2,500

Funding: Personal and private investor

Preview Format: media files - .MOV

Exhibition Format: media file: .MOV; DVD; Blu-ray

Print Details: Color, Stereo

Film Sound: Dolby Digital

Aspect Ratio: 1.85 (USA)

# SCREENINGS

- Movie Premiere (South Lyon, MI): March 2014
- Afternoon Showcase at the Gem (Beaverton, MI): April 2014
- Mitten Movie Project (Royal Oak, MI): July 2014
- The Indie Gathering International Film Festival (Hudson, OH): August 2014
- Made-In-Michigan Film Festival (Frankenmuth, MI): October 2014
- Silent River Film Festival (Irvine/Beverly Hills, CA): October 2014
- 3rd Delhi Shorts International Film Festival (Delhi, India): November 2014
- “Best of the Mitten Movie Project ” (Royal Oak, MI): December 2014
- Mumbai Shorts International Film Festival (Mumbai, India): December 2014



## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

Having endured the loss of not one, but two children in my family, I found I needed a form of emotional release after experiencing these tragic events. Writing and producing my film 'Message' was a way to release such emotions. The film's story is based and emotionally grounded by the actual loss of two children. Although the characters of Eric and Samantha Millar are completely fictitious, and loosely based on actual persons, the human scenario they are placed in is emotionally true, and only slightly removed from reality by its canted use of the supernatural.

At the premiere, moments after the film's end credits completed, I walked up in front of the audience to give them my thanks. What I witnessed was amazing... they were wiping tears from their eyes. I was elated. The audience had experienced the true 'message' of the film. What I had set out to write, worked, right down to the surprise twist ending... that no-one saw coming. Audiences continually remark, that even though the film had an underlying supernatural tone to it, the reality of what was happening between the husband and wife was very emotional, true, and well executed. I personally love seeing and hearing the varied audience reactions to the twist ending. I smile each time knowing... I got 'em again!

It is my hope that audiences everywhere get the chance to view my film, if only to deliver the message that, there is no room for alienation when a loss of a loved one happens. It is at that moment we must bond together, even closer, to help mend what was taken away.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

"Producing reality"

Producing a short film is no different than producing a feature film, to me at least. The only difference between the two... the budget, at least in my world. 'Message' was one of the easier films I've produced thanks to its one location and cast of two characters. The way I work as a director is somewhat different than others and most times, I am the director of photography for my films. I prefer to rehearse with my actors on-set, then again including the camera and crew. I prefer it this way only to keep the production on schedule. My scripts are usually around 30-pages in length. When I shoot my short films, I have three days to complete 10-pages per day, so I expect a lot from my actors. But in turn, with how I plan rehearsals, there are no surprises.

Producing reality means allowing the actors to act; to live and breath life into their characters. Letting the actors become the character we are watching allows us to take the emotional journey they are experiencing. It isn't about keeping to page count, it's about letting the scene play out as natural as possible. To ebb and flow as it would in reality. I expect my actors to act. The less I find myself directing the actor the more real they become one with their character.

As a side note: even though I write and direct dramas, I always expect laughter on the set. It's what keeps us going.

## NEWS AND REVIEWS

'MESSAGE' - reviewed March 29, 2014 by Local Film Critic Richard Johnson

Starring Ashley-Rene' Everest, Nicholas Joseph Mackey, A married couple are at odds trying to deal with the loss of their daughter, when the wife notices a message on the child's play phone, which only deepens their emotional divide. Michigan based Writer/Director Skip Erickson has produced a poignant 30 minute short film that is captivating in its presentation of grief, marital aversion and the supernatural blended together for some above average story telling. His choice of the two leads delivered all the emotional tone required to make this a high quality endeavor. 3 1/2 stars out of 4 for a memorable premiere screening today at the South Lyon theater.

By Nicole Robertson, The Oakland Press - Posted: 10/01/14, 1:33PM EDT

Two Rochester Hills-based movies — one inspirational, the other mysterious — and a documentary about a Pontiac artist are among the entries at the Made-in-Michigan Film Festival this weekend in Frankenmuth.

Self-taught filmmaker Skip Erickson, 46, of Rochester Hills presents his 28-minute short, "M3554G3" ("Message"), a psychological twister about a couple, Eric and Samantha, coming to terms with the loss of their daughter. As they drift apart, Samatha receives a message from her dead child. Is it real, or is she insane? This film is part of a block of shorts screening at the MiMFF at 5:10 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 4.

Erickson has been a film editor and scorer for more than 20 years. It won an Audience Choice Award at the Mitten Movie Project in July.

"It's good to say I have an award-winning film — that's nice right out of the gate," Erickson says. "As a matter of fact, I had already directed this movie 11 years ago and never had a chance to finish it."

His story was inspired by "Twilight Zone," but also by events in his own life.

"I like my stories to be based on a true premise," Erickson says. "This movie, 'Message,' when I wrote it 11 years ago, my sister and brother-in-law had lost two daughters."

He especially enjoys seeing the audience reaction.

"They love the twist in the movie, and they did not see the ending coming," Erickson says. "The key to writing a psychological drama like this is ... secrecy. I ask everybody, 'Don't tell the ending.'"

Erickson's movie will be shown at the Mitten Movie Project in December at the Main Art Theatre in Royal Oak.

# AWARDS



Mitten Movie Project  
 - "Audience Choice Award" (40% of vote)  
 - "Best Short"  
 Royal Oak, MI, USA  
 July 2014 (Film Festival)

Indie Gathering International Film Festival  
 - "Best Short Drama"  
 Hudson, OH, USA  
 August 2014 (Film Festival)

Made-In-Michigan Film Festival  
 - "Best Narrative Short"  
 Frankenmuth, MI, USA  
 October 2014 (Film Festival)

Silent River Film Festival  
 - "Best Actress (Short)"  
 Irvine/Beverly Hills, CA, USA  
 October 2014 (Film Festival)

Delhi Shorts International Film Festival  
 - "Best Actress (Short)"  
 Delhi, India  
 November 2014 (Film Festival)

"Best of the Mitten Movie Project"  
 - "Best Actress"  
 - "3rd Place - Screenwriting"  
 - "3rd Place - Sound"  
 Royal Oak, MI, USA  
 December 2014 (Film Festival)

Mumbai International Film Festival  
 - "Jury Award - 'Best Background Music'"  
 Mumbai, India  
 December 2014 (Film Festival)

# FILM INFORMATION

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