

LOVE AND ROADKILL
14 minutes, 35mm, USA 2008

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LOG LINE

A short film about love, trust and dead animals.

SYNOPSIS

Her car stalled in upstate New York, a Manhattan woman must depend on a local man for help. Their brief encounter confronts questions of trust, death and random violence. Based on the one-act play by Rose Caruso.

CAST

Joyce: Madeleine Potter
Eddie: Bill Camp

MAIN CREDITS

Director: John David Allen
Screenplay: Elisabeth Lewis Corley
Producer: Laura Heberton
Executive Producer: James Ivory
Based on the play by: Rose Caruso
Dir. of Photography: Martin Ahlgren
Music: Giancarlo Vulcano
Editor: David O. Rogers

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I wanted to make this film from the moment I first heard the title of the play. "Love and Roadkill" oozes with irony, replacing romantic notions of love with a swath of casualties. Who could resist? But there's more than this on Rose Caruso's mind. Her two mismatched characters ask a surprising array of existential questions in a concise, original scenario.

Defining a visual approach began with the fact that the main character refuses to leave her car. I worked with DP Martin Ahlgren and editor David Rogers to reveal the car as a kind of metallic cocoon from which Joyce slowly, tentatively emerges. The mysterious way her car and phone stop working lands her in a twilight zone, where every detail takes on new meaning. Giancarlo Vulcano's score contributes with light guitar feedback behind a spare main theme. Elisabeth Lewis Corley's script keeps close to the play but slyly adds cell phones, giving the film a new, familiar metaphor for the futility of technology in human relations.

It was 1997 when I first saw this one-act, directed by Joseph Megel. The world has changed since then. Playwright Rose Caruso is no longer with us. Communication technologies have exploded. But questions of fear and trust and connection between people – questions this story dives headlong into – are as relevant as ever.

BIOGRAPHIES

John David Allen (Director)

John David Allen has spent most of the past ten years editing feature films for Merchant Ivory Productions and other New York filmmakers. Prior to that he wrote and directed a number of award-winning shorts. His short films have screened at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Institute, on ABC, HBO, the Disney Channel and PBS. Stephen Holden of The New York Times cited his film *Mona's Pets* as the best of the short films compiled in The Short and Funnies, which ran at New York's Film Forum in 1992. His films, including *American Sign-Off* and *Mr. McAllister's Cigarette Holder*, have screened at festivals in Oberhausen, Clermont-Ferrand, Madrid, Melbourne, Cambridge, and San Francisco, and won more than a dozen festival prizes.

He has edited films for directors John Turturro, Alexandre Rockwell, Ismail Merchant and James Ivory, and has edited five Merchant Ivory films, including *The Golden Bowl*, *Le Divorce*, *The White Countess* and the soon-to-be-released *City of Your Final Destination*. For *Le Divorce*, he was tapped to direct the complicated Eiffel Tower sequence. For *The White Countess* he traveled to Shanghai to direct key scenes of the 1936 Japanese invasion.

He is now in preproduction for his first feature film as director, *Okefenokee*, set in his native Georgia.

Madeleine Potter (Joyce)

Madeleine Potter's most notable film credits are with Merchant Ivory for whom she has done four films: *The Bostonians*, in which she starred with Vanessa Redgrave and Christopher Reeve, *Slaves of New York*, *The Golden Bowl* and *The White Countess*. Her London stage work includes *The Internationalist* at the Gate; *Southwark Fair* at the Royal National Theatre; *After Mrs Rochester* (People's Choice Best Actress

Nominee), which won an Evening Standard Award and Time Out Best Play of the Year; *Madame Melville*; *All My Sons* for the Royal National Theatre; and *An Ideal Husband*, directed by Sir Peter Hall. She appeared in the premiere of Sarah Kane's *4:48 Psychosis* at the Royal Court, and *The Maiden's Prayer* at the Bush Theatre. Her Broadway credits include *An Ideal Husband*, *The Master Builder*, *The Crucible*, *Getting Married*, *Metamorphosis*, *Plenty* and *Slab Boys*. Other New York credits include *Pygmalion*, *Playboy of the Western World*, *The Plough and the Stars*, *Richard III* and the premieres of *Lydie Breeze* and *Abingdon Square*.

Bill Camp (Eddie)

Bill Camp's film credits include *Public Enemies*, *Deception*, *Reservation Road*, *The Guitar*, *The Dying Gaul*, *Rounders*, *In and Out*, and *Reversal of Fortune*. Television credits include *Brotherhood* (Showtime), *Law and Order*, *L&O: Criminal Intent*, *Joan of Arcadia*, *New York Undercover*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Prince Street*, *Hamlet (PBS Great Performances)*. He has extensive Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theater credits, has received OBIE and Elliot Norton Awards, and is a graduate of the Juilliard School, Drama Division, Group 18.

Elisabeth Lewis Corley (Screenwriter)

Elisabeth Lewis Corley was founding artistic director of the Atlanta Shakespeare Company, now operating as The Shakespeare Tavern. A Highest-Honors-in-Poetry graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, currently in the MFA program in poetry at Warren Wilson College, Corley's poems have appeared in *Southern Poetry Review*, *Hyperion*, *Carolina Quarterly*, *Feminist Studies*, *BigCityLit* and other publications. In New York she worked for Signature Theatre Company in its first four seasons as an actor and producer and produced plays by award-winning playwright and novelist Jim Grimsley for Harland Productions. She served Harold Levy, Chancellor of the New York City Board of Education, as an artistic advisor and consultant for special projects. Her short film *About Time*, directed by Joseph Megel, is currently in post-production with Harland's Creek Productions. Her screenplay with co-screenwriter and director, John David Allen, *Okfenokee*, is in preproduction.

Laura Heberton (Producer)

Laura Heberton is a writer of fiction, poetry and nonfiction and has been published in many journals and periodicals, and is nearly, nearly finished her novel, *Mother Tongue*. She holds an MFA from NYU's Creative Writing Program. She has worked as an editor and reporter at several newspapers and glossy magazines, including *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *Details*. She is an executive producer of the soon-to-be-released feature film *The New Twenty* by writer-director Chris Mason Johnson. As a producer and as a screenwriter, she is developing several independent feature films and plays. Laura is actively involved with The New York Public Library, a place she holds dear to her heart. She divides her time between London and New York.

James Ivory (Executive Producer)

Co-founder of the filmmaking team Merchant Ivory Productions, James Ivory previously received Best Director Academy Award® nominations for *Remains of the Day*, *Howards End* and *A Room with a View*. All three films also received Best Picture nominations. Ivory is a recipient of the Director's Guild of America's D.W. Griffith Lifetime Achievement Award. Beginning his career as a documentary filmmaker, Ivory teamed with producer Ismail Merchant in 1962 to make *The Householder*. Based on a novel by Ruth Praver Jhabvala, the film marked the first of the trio's features centering on the people and culture of India. The team's second effort, *Shakespeare Wallah* (1965), attracted international attention for its sensitive portrayal of a family of British touring actors and its insights into the legacy of colonialism. Ivory has directed 27 feature films, including *Bombay Talkie*, *Heat and Dust*, *The Europeans*, *Quartet*, *The Bostonians*, *Maurice*, *Mr. & Mrs. Bridge*, *Jefferson in Paris*, *A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries*, *The Golden Bowl* and *Le Divorce*.

Rose Caruso (Playwright)

Rose Caruso was an award-winning writer and creative ad director. Her play *Six Characters in Search of an Oncologist* was commissioned for SmallBeer Theatre Company, where her play, *Shamanism in New Jersey*, had its first reading and where her play, *The Little Playwright*, was also produced. *The First Light Home*, developed at the Midwest Playlabs Conference, was presented at the Ensemble Studio Theatre's Octoberfest and produced at Virginia Tech. Her play *Shamanism in New Jersey* was produced at the 1996 Source Theatre Summer Festival. Her ten-minute play, *Love & Roadkill* was a participant in the Source Theatre's Ten-Minute Play Fest, and was produced at 12 Miles West as was her last play *Tales of an Urban Burb*. Her play *ChemoBuddies* was also produced at 12 Miles West in their 1996 one-act play festival, Roadside Attractions. Other plays include *Suffering Heart Salon* and *Deep Cleaning*. Rose was a member of the Dramatist's Guild and the Writer's Guild of America/West. Before her untimely passing Rose lived in New Jersey with her husband, Alan, and daughter, Elena.

Martin Ahlgren (Director of Photography)

Martin Ahlgren was raised in Sweden and would probably have followed some path related to science if he hadn't watched the Christopher Lambert movie "*Highlander*" when he was 14 years old. From then on he started making films, ranging from the short and violent to the long and tedious.

After various studies such as Astronomy and Film Theory, an uncompleted military service and other life lessons, he headed to New York and the School of Visual Arts. Experimenting through 25 student films there as a cinematographer led to actual work when he graduated in 2000. He has since been shooting mostly commercials and music videos in places near and far, and continues to live in New York.

